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CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE

AND

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BOOK OF THE MONTHS.

BY

GEORGE SOANE, B.A.

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PREFACE.

PREFACES, I am aware, are not often read in the present day, except by reviewers at a short notice, who find them exceedingly convenient, as by a judicious use of the few hints contained in them a clever writer will compound a very palatable article without reading a line of the work supposed to be under consideration. I have been treated in this way myself more than once, and by a slight misapprehension of a prefatory phrase or sentence have been convicted of blunders that I never committed. Custom, however, reconciles us to all things, and having, like the eels in the matter of skinning, grown used to it, I do not now choose to balk my humour for any one. My delinquency in this is of the less importance, since none can be compelled to read a preface, who do not like it; as Liston used to say in one of the most popular of his farces, "it's all optional;" and besides I understand from good authority that my poor work under any circumstances is to be handsomely belaboured, so I may as well do something to

deserve it. Some of the more fiery spirits among the Freemasons, it would seem, became indignant at the first announcement of the CURIOSITIES, because they found therein a hint that the veil would be lifted from their mysteries, and, however apt in keeping Masonic secrets, they could by no means make a secret of their resentment; I suppose they knew the result would be much the same as when the veil was withdrawn from Mokanna, the notorious prophet of Khorassan, for ever since, like Tam O'Shanter's dame, they have been nursing their wrath to keep it warm, till time and opportunity should bring the offender within their reach. On such occasions it is quite useless exclaiming with the poet, "iram cohibe"—I am but telling you the truth—for though all protest to love and admire Truth, it is only when Truth happens to be of the same opinion with themselves; at other times the good lady may knock often enough at the door before she finds any one at home to her, and indeed should think herself highly fortunate if the rabble do not get up a cry of—"mad dog!"—and hunt her to death on pretence of hydrophobia. But enough, and more than enough, of this subject; it is high time, in lawyer phrase, to call another cause.

So far as I know, there is not any work that from similarity of purpose can be said to clash with this of mine, or that would appear by anticipating to make my *Curiosities* no curiosities at all. In name it certainly interferes with one of D'Israeli's most popular

productions, but the resemblance does not go beyond the title-page; our objects are altogether different; and on this account, if upon no other, the name perhaps was not very wisely adopted.

Hone's *Every Day Book* presents at first sight a much greater appearance of similarity, if not in execution, at least in design. Not however to speak harshly of a shrewd and diligent enquirer, who loved truth and sought her to the best of his abilities, Hone was altogether deficient in that knowledge, which is requisite for the tracing up of national customs to their sources; his information on all such topics was of necessity second-hand, Alban Butler serving him as an authority for whatever related to the Saints, while Brand principally supplied him with ancient ceremonies and manners. With the old English dramatists, the old chronicles, and the curious tracts of the same period he was very little acquainted. It was still worse when he came to another grand source of information, and which being under the lock of other languages than the English, it is only too plain he wanted the key to it, so that his work is no more for the most part than a compilation from compilations. Few even of those, who do possess the *open sesame* to this pagan temple of antiquities, have shewn themselves particularly anxious to use it; and they can hardly be blamed for their indifference, for, dropping all metaphor, how much of the popular customs and superstitions is only to be understood by reference to the canons of synods and

the writings of Saints—huge folios, from which a few grains of useful matter are to be extracted at the expense of days and weeks of labour.

Brand's *Popular Antiquities* is a work of a very different order, in spite of the careless and even ignorant way in which it has been edited by Sir Henry Ellis. As a storehouse of facts relative to the ancient habits and beliefs of the people it is invaluable, and the best antiquarian may glean something from it; but yet—fie upon *but yet!* it doth alloy the good precedent—such a compilation is more a work of reference than one to be read continouusly, for there is not the slightest attempt in it either at order or connexion; the various articles are flung together indiscriminately as in a common-place book, so that their utility is very problematical, except to those whose habitual studies enable them to find their way amidst the chaos. Independently of this, our road does not lie for long together, more than one half of the CURIOSITIES being devoted to topics quite alien from the *Popular Antiquities.*

There is yet another work that requires to be mentioned, as having gone over a part of the ground which I propose to travel—*Foster's Perennial Calendar.* But the points of contact between us are neither numerous nor important. The Flora and the Fauna, which are the most valuable portions of his work, are with me matters of very minor consideration, and can hardly be said to be more than incidentally mentioned. On the other hand he has not

given much attention to the very topics, which I have looked upon as the most essential. Neither therefore stands in the way of the other, even supposing the good-natured reader were disposed to allow of our being likely to clash in other respects.

Having thus despatched my rivals, something after the fashion of the redoubted Thomas Thumb, who "made his giants first, and then he killed them," I wish to say a few words in explanation of the numerous extracts occurring in the notes. No doubt, I apprehend, can exist as to the propriety of minute and correct references to the authorities on which any historical work has been based, and history must mingle more or less with all antiquarian discussions. The reader has a full right to know upon whose authority he is expected to believe the facts advanced, and without such information the unsupported statement of the modern writer must stand for nothing. But those, who will go with me thus far, may yet be disposed to question the propriety of lengthened extracts such as occur in the following pages. To objections of this kind I can only reply that the quotations have been given with no other view than to save the curious the trouble of hunting out dusty folios that are not likely to be found any where but in the largest libraries. Even where the works are of a more familiar nature, it still seemed to me better that the passages referred to should be brought together and presented to the eye at once, as offering the readiest means of comparing facts with statements.

This may perhaps seem a somewhat *lengthy* discussion, as our Yankee friends would call it, upon subjects of no great importance in themselves, and yet I am tempted to prolong it by briefly adverting to a point, on which I am particularly anxious not to be misunderstood. If the course of these enquiries has of necessity led to my showing at how early a period superstitious abuses began to gather about the purer code of Christianity, still I would not have it supposed for a moment that in so doing I have wished to adjudge the grand questions that divide the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches; they are matters of belief and doctrine, not of history, and, as their merits can not be tested by human reason, I feel and must acknowledge my own inability to deal with them. Such facts as patient research, and tolerably extensive reading have enabled me to elicit, I have advanced honestly and fearlessly, without enquiring whither they might lead; it is for others to draw conclusions.

GEORGE SOANE.

September 20, 1847.

CONTENTS.

Abate, ii. 277.
Abrac, ii. 87.
Abstinence, days of, i. 197.
Acorns, used by Druids, ii. 277.
Adonis, Temple of, i. 25.
Advent, Divinations in, i. 45.
Æons, ii. 76.
ÆTNA, a vomitory of hell, ii. 241.
Agistments, ii. 137.
Agnes, Saint, i. 38.
AGUE, how to cure, ii. 198.
Alb, the, i. 192.
ALBEMARLE (Duke of), his marriage, i. 257.
Alchemists, knew the gaseous nature of water, ii. 95.
Alchemy, its origin, ii. 39.
ALE-HOUSES, i. 88.
Ales, Bride, i. 283; ii. 125.
—— Clerks, *id.*
—— Church, i. 282; ii. 125.
—— Give, i. 283.
—— Huff's, i. 90.
—— Lamb, i. 283.
—— Leet, *id.*
—— Quarter, *id.*
—— Scot, *id.*
—— Whitsun, i. 278.
ALEXANDER, Anecdote of, i. 288.
ALL FOOL'S DAY, i. 169.
ALL SAINT'S DAY, ii. 235.
—— removed to November, i. 285.
ALL SOULS, ii. 238.
Amicus and Amelius, i. 76.
Amphitomantia, i. 42.
Andrea, John Valentine, ii. 43.
—— his work, called Fama, &c. *id.*
Andrew's (Saint) Day, ii. 263.
ANGEL, meaning of, ii. 206.
—— Ranks of, ii. 207.
ANGEL GUARDIANS, Feast of, ii. 206.
ANGLERS, i. 84.
Angles, School of the, ii. 126.
Anglo-Saxons, when the term was first used, ii, 127.
Anne (St.) Eve, Divinations on, i. 41.
ANNUNCIATION, Day of, i. 130.
Annus Communis, ii. 120.
ANTERRHINON, i. 245.
Apollo, how his altar was decorated, ii. 277.
Apparition of St. Michael, i. 270.
Apple-trees, custom in regard to, i. 19.
APRIL, why so called, i. 161.
—— FOOLS, i. 169.
—— GOWKS, i. 174.
ARCHAUS, the, i. 141.
ARISI EVANS, i. 277.
ARMER HEINRICH, Poem of, i. 75.
Arnmonath, ii. 97, 119.
ASCENSION EVE, i. 275.
Ashes, Divination by, ii. 271.
ASHTAROTH, i. 191.
ASH WEDNESDAY, i. 69.
ASS, THE LAME, i. 105.
Assassins, ii. 75.
Assumption of the Virgin Mary, ii. 131.
Astrologers, ii. 73.
Astrologer's Feast, ii. 63.
ASTRUM, i. 147.
ASTURDAY, i. 188.
Atalanta Fugiens, ii. 62, 95.
Atlantis, (New), ii. 49.
AURICULAR CONFESSION, its origin, ii. 334.
AUSTLE, Saint, i. 203.
Autumn, Astronomical and Popular, ii. 262.
Auxerre, Council of, i. 10.
AZOTH, i. 155.

BAAL-SAMHAN, ii. 219.
BACHELER, meaning of, ii. 251.
Bacon, Blessing of, ii. 273.
—— Custom of the Flitch of, at Tutbury, ii. 226.
—— Custom at Dunmoor, ii. 251

Baker's Maukin, i. 61.
Bale, i. 33; ii. 335.
Bale or Basel, i. 140.
Balsab, Priests of, ii, 219.
Barber's Sunday Custom, ii. 273.
Barmonath, ii. 119.
Barristers, Utfer, ii. 324.
Bartholomew Fair, ii. 160.
Barry, Custom of the Isle of, i. 189.
Barringout, i. 66.
Barvas-River, Superstition of, ii. 245.
Basilisk, i. 288.
Battles, ii. 21.
Bay, used by the Greeks, ii. 277.
Bayle and his Imitators, i. 213.
Bealtine or Beltine, i. 229.
Bean-King, i. 31.
Beans, Given at funerals, i. 124.
—— Religious uses of, *id.*
—— Lucky in sales, i. 125.
—— Held sacred by the Pythagoræans, i. 126.
—— King, i. 31.
—— Cakes, i. 29, 125.
—— Invisible, i. 309.
Bear (The), His own doctor, i. 156.
Bede, why called "the Venerable," ii. 260.
Bel, i. 228.
Beli, Island of, i. 229.
Bells, when first rung, ii. 268.
—— forbidden on Halloween, ii. 222.
Berger et de la Bergere, Jeu de, i. 235.
Bessy, the, i. 34.
Bete (La) Saint Loup, i. 303.
Bethania, i. 28.
Bittern, i. 164.
Black-Cat, ii. 278.
Black-Cap, ii. 279.
Bleeding the great toe, i. 74.
Blood-Baths, i. 72.
Blood of Horses, venomous, i. 74.
—— of Bulls, *id.*
—— of Goats, *id.*
Blossom's Inn, ii. 333.
Blotmonath, or Blutmonath, ii. 234.
Blow a Morte, ii. 138.
—— a Recheate, *id.*
—— a Seek, *id.*
Boar's Head, Carol of the, ii. 312.
Bonfires at Midsummer Eve, ii. 8, 13.
—— why so called, *ii.* 14, 16, 17.
Book of Sports ordered to be burnt, i. 248.
Booming, or Bumping, i. 164.
Boosy, i. 18.
Boot-halers, i. 81.
Borderies, i. 281.
Bosom-Winds, ii. 152.
Bottom-Winds, ii. 151.
Boxing-Day, ii. 317.
—— Origin of, ii. 318.
—— forbidden, ii. 319.
Boy-Bishop, Festival of, ii. 287.
Box, i. 178.
Brachmonath, or Bræchmonath, ii. 2.
Braggot, i. 128.
Brickaderian, i. 255.
Bride-cakes, ii. 270.
Broom, thrown in the way of a witch, *id.*
Brothers, the, ii. 50.
Buckland Hag, i. 207.
Budos, Louisa de, i. 131.
Buildings, why left unfinished by the Jews, ii. 265.
Bull's Blood, venomous, i. 74.
Bull's Head, the Messenger of Death, i. 290.
Bull-Running at Tutbury, ii. 132, 140.
—— at Stamford, ii. 144.
Buns, Hot Cross, i. 184.
Burgonet, ii. 20.
Burning of the Hill, ii. 273.
Burton, Robert, i. 322.
Burnet, Thomas, ii. 88.

Cabala, or Cabbala, i. 148; ii. 40, 91.
—— various kinds of, ii. 41.
—— the Masonic Secret, ii. 77.
Caduceus, Allegory of, ii. 11.
Cakes, Whirlin, i. 123.
—— Bean, i. 29, 125.
—— Symnel, i. 128.
—— Saffron, *id.*

Cakes, Heavy, i. 266.
—— Dumb, ii. 31, 276.
—— on the Eve of Twelfth Day, i. 18.
—— on Twelfth-Night, i. 29.
—— Bride, ii. 270.
—— Rocking, ii. 200.
—— Kichell, ii. 336.
CAKE NIGHT, ii. 217.
—— SOUL, ii. 244, 245.
—— Soul-Mass, ii. 244.
Calendar, Saxon, ii. 119.
Campbell, Lord, his error, ii. 128.
Candle-Rush, Dancing the, ii. 275.
CANDLEMAS-DAY, why so called, i. 52.
CANDLEMAS EVE, i. 51.
Candles (Lighted) carried in procession on the day of the Purification, i. 38.
—— why lighted at Christmas, ii. 307.
—— Leap-Candle, ii. 275.
CANDLESTICKS WITH SEVEN BRANCHES, ii. 269.
Cansa, the Hindoo Herod, i. 26.
Cantilenæ forbidden, i. 10.
CAPITILUVIUM, i. 175.
CARE, or CARL, SUNDAY, i. 119, 120.
Carlings, i. 123.
Carna, ii. 2.
Carols, Derivation of the word, ii. 311.
—— Earliest collection of, ii. 312.
—— of the Boar's Head, *id.*
Carrinas, i. 122.
CART, RIDING IN, ignominious, i. 62.
Cavern, Inhabitants of, ii. 293.
Cauld Lad of Hilton, ii. 197.
Ceres, how her altar was decorated, ii. 277.
Cervulus, or Cervula, Game of, i. 11.
Champernoun, story of, i. 325.
Charm against thunder, ii. 271.
—— Herefordshire, ii. 278.
CHAREITE, i. 62.
Chariot Races on the New Year, i. 9.
CHEATERS, i. 84.
CHEESE used for blessing, i. 275.
CHERRY AND FAIR STAR, origin of, i. 97.
CHILDERMAS DAY, ii. 321.
—— whipping of children on, ii. 322.
—— of monks, ii. 321.
CHILDREN, sacrifice of, i. 229.
CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS, i. 243, 261.
Christians (Early) prayed in cemeteries, ii. 300.
Christianity, early corruptions of, ii. 167.
Christmas Day, called Epiphany, i. 307.
—— called Theophany, ii. 308.
—— called Noel, or Nowell, *id.*
—— Candles, ii. 301.
—— why candles were lighted upon, ii. 307.
—— the first day of the Anglo-Saxon year, ii. 310.
—— Carols upon, *id.*
Christmas Eve, ii. 298.
—— its customs originated in the Saturnalia, ii. 300.
—— Candles, ii. 301.
—— Decking of Houses on, ii. 302.
—— Cheese, ii. 303.
—— Feast in Kent called the Rumbald, *id.*
—— Customs at Rippon, *id.*
—— Custom in the Isle of Man, ii. 304.
—— Customs in Germany, ii. 305.
Christmonath, ii. 281.
CHURCH ALES, i. 282.
CHURCH-HOUSE, *id.*
CINQUE-FOIL, superstition of, i. 245.
Circumcision, i. 5.
Civil year, i. 111.
CLARGES, ANNE, wife of General Monk, i. 257.
—— Sir Walter, Trial of, *id.*
CLEMENT, Saint, ii. 260.
CLERK ALES, i. 282.
Clerks (Three), murder of, ii. 296.
Climacteric, i. 298.
Clock-Striking, ii. 271.
CLOGGS, ii. 262.
CLOTHES, Roast Meat, ii. 333.
Coal (A rare Coal), Divination by, ii. 28.

Cocknbys, King of, ii. 325.
Cock, Throwing at, i. 63.
Cockal, game of, i. 8.
Cockell Bread, ii. 199.
Cock-fighting, origin of, i. 67.
Coleridge, his account of Christmas in Germany, ii. 305.
Coleshill, Custom at, i. 195.
Collop-Monday, i. 57.
Cologne, three Kings of, i. 19.
Commessationes forbidden, i. 10.
Conception of the Virgin, ii. 297.
Confarrentia, ii. 270.
Confession, (Auricular) origin of, ii. 334.
Convents, Custom of, on St. Nicholas' Eve, ii. 283.
Cornell, ii. 138.
Corning, Going a, ii. 298.
Cornish Customs on May-Day, i. 263.
Cornwall, Natural Phenomenon in, i. 203.
Corpses, bleeding, ii. 198.
——, Mahometan Custom in regard to, ii. 265.
Corpus Christi, ii. 6.
Cotier, or Coythier, Jacques, i. 76.
Country-Practices, ii. 277.
Courts, Woodmote, ii. 136.
—— Forty Days, ii. 137.
—— Pie-Powder, ii. 161.
Crispin and Crispianus, Saints, ii. 212.
Crollius, i. 146.
Cromnyomantia, i. 41.
Crooked People, i. 150.
Cross, Creeping to, i. 185, 186.
—— Discovery of, i. 257.
—— Week, i. 273.
—— Finding of, (Inventio Crucis), i. 267.
—— Holy-Cross-Day, *id.*
—— Exaltation of, ii. 167.
—— Signing with, a protection against demons, ii. 266.
Cross-Fell, ii. 147.
—— Description of, ii. 148.
Crosses, i. 85.
Crouch, alias R. Burton, i. 322.
Crumpet, the prize-fighter, i. 255.
Cuckoo, i. 167.
Cuckoos, i. 205.
Cup, Sacramental, ii. 336.
Cupid and Psyche, i. 88.
Custom, the servant of Venus, i. 102.
Cuthbert, Saint, i. 128.
Cybele, ii. 237.
Cymhortha, i. 114.

Dain, Oliver Le, i. 78.
Damian, his Legend, ii. 240.
——— His Gloria Paradisi, ii. 241.
Dance of the Salii, i. 236.
—— of Fools or Mattachins, *id.*
Dancing the Candle-Rush, ii. 275.
Danish Legend, i. 63.
Darts, Fairy, i. 210.
David's, St., Day, i. 113.
Day, Twelfth, the Eve of, i. 18.
—— Twelfth, i. 21.
—— Easter, i. 188, 193.
—— Hock, or Hoke, i. 196.
—— Hearth, i. 190
—— Saint Mark's, i. 197.
—— Ascension, or Holy Thursday, i. 275.
—— Restoration, i. 284.
—— All Saints, removed to November, *i.* 285.
—— of the Annunciation, i. 113.
—— Saint David's, *id.*
—— Saint Patrick's, i. 115.
—— All Fools', i. 169.
—— Saint Distaff's or Saint Rock's, i. 32.
—— Saint New Year's, *i.* 12.
—— Saint Paul's, Prognostications on, i. 42.
—— Holy Rood, i. 267, 269; ii. 167.
—— New Year's, i. 5.
—— New Year's, in Rome, *i.* 6.
—— New Year's, its customs derived from the Romans, i. 9.—Denounced by the early Fathers, i. 10.
—— New Year's, Feast of All Fools, celebrated on, i. 13.
Dead, (the) raised by the saints, ii. 255.
Dead Bodies, how buried, ii. 265.
—— Bleeding of, ii. 198.

Death, image of, i. 128.
Debt, custom of, in the Isle of Man, ii. 274.
December Liberties, i. 8, 15.
Deptford Fair, i. 286.
Devil, very poor, i. 151.
—— Death of, ii. 195.
—— on Easter Day, i. 193.
Devil-Gilds, ii. 157.
Devonshire, Superstition as to Burns, &c., i. 205.
—— Superstition as to Cuckoos, *id.*
—— Superstition of the King's Evil, i. 206.
—— Superstition of the White-breasted Bird, *id.*
—— Apple, Superstition, i. 273.
—— of the Ox on Christmas Eve, ii. 305.
Dew, a solvent of Gold, ii. 57.
—— Symbolical of Christ, *id.*
Dice, the Romans played at, with their slaves, i. 8.
—— the bishops played at with their subordinates, *id.*
Divination by Water, i. 293.
—— by Ashes, i. 304, 305; ii. 271.
—— by a Knife, i. 304.
—— on Midsummer Eve, ii. 25, 27.
—— by Orpine, ii. 27.
—— by a Rare Coal, ii. 28.
—— by the Dumb Cake, ii. 31.
—— by Hempseed, *id.*
—— on St. Paul's Day, i. 42.
—— on St. Agnes' Eve, i. 41.
—— by cromnyomanthia, i. 41, 45.
—— by amphitomantia, i. 42.
Dog, how to cure the bite of, ii. 200.
Dog-Days, ii. 100.
—— end, ii. 131.
Dog-Star, ii. 100.
Dominica Palmarum, i. 174.
—— in Ramis P., *id.*
—— Magna, i. 175.
Doyat, Jean De, i. 78.
Dragons of Hercules, ii. 11.
Dragon, Red, ii. 57.
Druidism, connected with Mithratic worship, i. 9.
—— the Romans sought to extirpate it, *id.*
Druids, their use of oak-leaves and acorns, ii. 277.
—— their white robes in sacrifice, *id.*
Droitwich, Custom at, ii. 271.
Ducking Pond, i. 251.
Duddery, ii. 174, 179.
Dumb-Cake, ii. 31.
Dunmow, Custom at, ii. 231.

Ealdgate-Ward, i. 255.
Earth, the Great Mother, i. 223.
—— the Mother of the Gods, i. 119.
Easter-Eve, i. 186.
—— Day, i. 188, 193.
—— Holydays, i. 194.
Egg, Superstition of, i. 275.
Egyptian Mothers, i. 290.
Elephantiasis, i. 73.
Elixir Vitæ, i. 140.
Elms, an ancient name of Smithfield, ii. 161.
Emanation-System, i. 147.
Emblems of the Freemasons, ii. 92.
Embolismus, ii. 119, 120.
Encheson, i. 175.
Engine-Street, i. 255.
Easter, i. 164.
Eostermonath, i. 163; ii. 96.
Epimenides, the Cretan, his sleep, ii. 114.
—— Story of, *id*
Epiphany, Eve of, i. 18.
—— or Twelfth Day, i. 21.
—— a name given to Christmas Day, ii. 303.
Erastus, i. 137.
Erra Pater, his Prognostications, i. 42.
Escuage, ii. 227.
Esoteric Doctrines of the Egyptians, ii. 75.
—— of Moses and Plato compared, ii. 73.
—— of the Christians, ii. 73, 77.
—— of the Jews, ii. 76, 94.
—— of the Indians, ii. 94.

Esquerdes, Philip D', i. 78.
Eucharist, i. 188, 191.
Even Numbers, i. 296, 298, 300.
Evestrum, i. 155.
Evil May-Day, i. 256.
Exaltation of the Cross, ii. 166.

Fabaria, i. 125.
Fade, i. 266.
Fair, Deptford, i. 286.
—— Horn, ii. 209.
—— Stourbridge, Sturbitch, ii. 169.
—— Bartholomew, ii. 160; tolls levied at, ii. 162; its Duration, ii. 163.
Fairies, ii. 278.
Fama, of Andrea, ii. 43, 91.
Fasten, or Fasterns, i. 58.
Fasting's Even, *id.*
Fasts and Abstinence, how they differ, i. 197.
Fathers of the Church, i. 10.
Fauna, i. 5. 51. 113. 164; ii. 4. 99. 122. 160. 203. 234.
Faust, Klinger's, i. 79.
Feast of Fools, i. 13.
—— of Subdeacons, i. 14.
Februa, an expiatory sacrifice, i. 50.
Fenestrellis, ii. 248.
Fern, Superstitions of, ii. 30.
Fifolletts, or Feuxfollets, i. 301.
Flap Jack, i. 59.
Fleurdelize, To, i. 314.
Flora, i. 4. 50. 113. 168. 224. ii. 2. 97. 120. 158. 201. 234. 282.
Flora, Trial of, i. 247.
Floralia, i. 227.
Flood, ii. 64, 66.
Flowers at funerals, ii. 264.
Folkmote, i. 222.
Fond-Plough, i. 33.
Fools, All, Day, i. 169.
—— Feast of, i. 13.
—— Abbot of, i. 15.
—— Bishop of, i. 15, 17.
—— Feast of, at Rome, i. 170.
—— Dance of, i. 236.
—— their Dress, i. 239.
—— made on May, i. 250.
Football, i. 65.
Forty Days' Courts, ii. 137.
Frederick the Great, Anecdote of, ii. 93.
Free-Mason, its meaning, ii. 89.
Freemasons, Sum of their Doctrines, ii. 67.
—— connected with the Templars, ii. 71.
—— their Secret, ii. 77, 92.
—— not connected with the Guilds, ii. 77.
—— Lock's Letter concerning them, ii. 79.
Freemasonry, ii. 35.
—— derived from Adam, *id.*
—— when first heard of, ii. 66.
Fig-Tree Candles, i. 293.
Frogs, (The tongue of) a charm, i. 289.
Funeral Garlands, ii. 278.
Furmity, i. 127, 128.
Furry, i. 263.
—— Song, i. 264.

Game of Fawn, i. 11.
—— Calf-Game, *id.*
Ganging-Day, ii. 208.
Garlands, Funeral, ii. 278.
Gassendi, ii. 64.
Geese, on Michaelmas Day ii. 186.
—— on St. Stephen's Day, ii. 316.
—— on Martimas Day, ii. 258.
George, (St.) of Cappadocia, i. 196.
Gerstmonath, i. 97; ii. 157.
Ghost-Seers, i. 291.
Giants, at Guildhall, ii. 22.
Gibbon, a plagiarist from the French, i. 219.
—— His sneer at Symmachus, ii. 185.
Gifts, (New year's), amongst the Romans, i. 8.
—— forbidden by the fathers, i. 10.
—— in Queen Elizabeth's time, i. 12.
—— St. Nicholas, ii. 282.
—— Christmas, whence derived, ii. 318, 319.
—— forbidden, ii. 319.
Gipseys, ii. 267.
Girdle, to loose the, i. 313, 319.
—— its symbols, i. 319, 320.
Giuli Aftera, i. 4; ii. 96.

Giuli Erra, ii. 97.
Give-Ales, i. 282.
Gleineu Nadroeth, ii. 32.
Gnomes, i. 151,
Goat's Blood, venomous, i. 74.
—— sharpens iron, *id.*
Goblin, i. 301.
Godde's Sunday. i. 188.
—— Kichel, ii. 336.
Goluan, ii. 13.
Good Friday, i. 184.
Gooding, going a, ii. 297.
Goster, i. 163.
Grass-Week, i. 273.
Graves, Bishops consecrated their own, ii. 269.
—— Roses on, ii. 274.
Gregorie, his account of the Boy-bishop, ii. 287.
Greeks, how they decorated their altars, ii. 277.
Griddle, ii. 219.
Groviers, ii. 273
Guilds, Earliest Date of, ii. 90.
Gule. See Yule.
—— of August, ii. 122.
Gunpowder-Plot Day, ii. 245.
Guy Faux, ii. 245.
Guyles, i. 89.
Gyngle-Boys, i. 89.
Gypsies, i. 80.

Hackin, ii. 331.
Hagmana, ii. 281.
Haitho, i. 27.
Hair, to lose the, i. 313.
—— a sign of royalty, i. 316.
—— in the East, i. 318.
——among the Lacedæmonians, *id.*
—— among the Puritans, *id.*
Haligemonath, ii. 157.
Halsening, i. 179.
Hammer (Von), ii. 71.
Hans, Les, i. 300.
Hares, Custom relating to, i. 195.
—— when ominous, i. 306.
Hare-hunting, ii. 203.
Harness, ii. 20.
Hart (The), cures his own wounds, i. 156.
Hartlepool, Customs at, ii. 116.
Hay-thorn, Superstition of, i. 244.
Healths, Origin of the drinking of, ii. 330.
Heard Penny, ii. 126.
Hearth-Day, i. 190.
Heaving, i. 194.
Helena, finds the Cross, i. 257.
Helm Wind, ii. 147, 148.
—— Bar, ii 147, 150.
Hempseed, Divination by, ii. 32.
Henmonath, ii. 96.
Hen, Threshing the Fat, i. 65.
Hercules, how his altar was decorated, ii. 277.
—— Legend of, i. 227.
Heretics, how punished, ii. 267.
Herod, (Story of) doubtful, ii. 321.
Heymonath, ii. 97.
Hilary, whence derived, i. 119.
Hill, Burning of, ii. 273.
Hill Head, i. 203.
Hilton, Could Lad of, ii. 197.
Hinzelman, i. 95.
Hiram, the Tyrian, ii. 59.
Historical year, i. 111.
Hobby Horse, how dressed, i. 239.
Hock, or Hoke Day, i. 196.
Holly, i. 51.
Holly-Boy, i. 57.
Holworth, Burning Cliff at, i. 199.
Holy Cross Day, i. 267.
Holy Rood Day, i. 267, 269; ii. 165, 167.
Holy Thursday, i. 179.
Honain, an Arabian physician, i. 321.
Horn-Bearers, ii. 269.
Horn Fair, ii. 209.
Horns, Blowing of, whence derived, i. 242.
Horses' Blood, venomous, i. 74.
Horses, how to cure when hag-ridden, i. 306.
Horse-shoes, a charm against witches, i. 310.
House, Solomon's, ii. 44.
—— of the Spiritus Sanctus, *id.*
—— of Wisdom, ii. 73.
—— of Sciences (new), ii. 74.
Housel, i. 184.
Huckel-bone, Game of, i. 8.
Huff's Ale, i. 90.

Hu, a name of Bel, i. 229.
Huli Festival, i. 8. 169, 170, 229.
Hydrophobia, Spell against, i. 311.
Hypericon, i. 291.

Inn, Blossoms, or Bosom's, ii. 333.
Innocents' Day. ii. 321.
—— Boy Bishop on, ii. 291,
—— Flagellations on, ii. 322.
—— Ill omened, ii. 323.
Intentions, ii. 277.
Inventio Crucis, i. 267.
Invisible, how to be, i. 309, 310.
Invisibility, Receipt for, ii. 275.
Invocation of Saints, the origin of, ii. 300.
Isle of Man, i. 296.
Ivy, i. 51.
—— Girl, i. 57.

Jack-a-Lent, i. 70.
Jack in the Green, i. 262.
Jacks, i. 90.
Janus, i. 1, 2.
Jews, their ignorance, ii. 88.
——Their salutation of Christians, ii. 220.
Jornet, ii. 21.
Jours, Les Grands, i. 157.
Jude (Saint) His Day, ii. 215.
Junket, the beverage so called, i. 267.
Juno Februata, i. 55.

Kafur, ii. 293.
Karmath, ii. 73.
Kelds, ii. 153.
Kele, i. 49.
Ketellus, Story of, ii. 266.
Kichel Cake, ii. 336.
Kilda, (St.) Custom at the Isle of, i. 189.
King of Cockneys, ii. 325.
King's Declaration, concerning lawful sports, i. 266.
King's Evil, i. 206.
King's (Three) of Cologne, i. 19.
Klydmonath, i. 110.
Kneed Wheat, i. 127.

Lactantius, i. 246.
Lady-Day, i. 130.
Lady Nant's Well, i. 179.
Lady's (our) Cushion, i. 240.
Lake-Wakes, ii. 118.
Lamb-Ales, i. 282.
Lamb. Superstition in regard to, i. 275.
Lamb's Wool, i. 127, 273.
—— how made, ii. 329.
Lammas Day, ii. 122, 126.
Larentalia, i. 227.
Laske, i. 292.
Lattice, Red, i. 89.
Launceprisades, i. 85.
Leap-Candle, ii. 275.
Leek; Custom of wearing it, i. 113.
Legends, Danish, i. 63.
—— of Hercules, i. 227.
—— Finding of the Cross, i. 267.
—— of Saint Swithin, i. 103.
—— of the Seven Sleepers, ii. 104, 293.
——of Saint Nicholas, ii. 285, 296.
—— of Saint Agnes, or Haynes, i. 38.
Leghs, i. 282.
Lenctmonath, i. 110; ii. 96.
Lent Ales, i. 282.
Lent, Derivation of, i. 71.
Lent-Monath, i. 110.
Leprosie White, i. 73.
Letiches, i. 301.
Libanius, i. 6.
Lida Erra, ii. 2, 96.
Lida Aftera, ii. 96.
Lide, i. 305.
Light, from the East, ii. 40.
Lifting, i. 194.
Loaf-Mass, ii. 126.
Locke (Pseudo) his Letter respecting the Freemasons, ii. 79.
Lodge or College (Rosicrucian), ii. 63.
Lætare Sunday, i. 119, 120.
Long Meg and her Daughters, i. 294.
Lord and Lady of the May, i. 233.
Louis XI. His last Illness and Death, i. 77.
Loup Garon, i. 301.
Love Feasts, ii. 270.
Lowing of the Bittern, i. 164.
Lubins, i. 301.
Ludi Compitalii, ii. 16.
Luke's, (Saint) Day, ii. 209.
Lunar Superstition, i. 46.

Lupercalia, i. 55.
Lux, ii. 57.

Mace, its Derivation, i. 279.
Macrocosm, i. 149.
Mædrenech, ii. 119. 299.
Magi, i. 19.
—— Their Names, i. 21
—— Who they really were, i. 22.
—— Highly honoured, i. 23.
—— Their classes, *id.*
—— Annual visits to Bethlehem, i. 25.
—— Their Number, i. 26.
Magia, Meaning of the word, i. 22.
Magpies prognosticate, i. 306.
—— Superstition in regard to, ii. 271.
Maid Marian, i. 233.
—— Her dress, i. 238.
Maier, Michael, ii. 57, 59.
Malkin Tower, i. 209.
Maimonides, ii. 76.
Maimun Caliph, ii. 73.
Maiuma, Festival of, i. 226.
Mamertus, i. 271.
Man (Isle of), Custom as to dead debtors, ii. 274.
Mantuanus (Baptista), Lines from, ii. 165.
Marriage, not to be solemnized on May-Day, i. 244.
—— why celebrated in the forenoon, i. 311.
—— a receipt to know whom we are to have in, ii. 275, 276.
Martin (Saint), ii. 255.
Martinmas, or Martlemas, ii. 255.
—— Custom on, ii. 259.
—— Old, ii. 260.
Martlemas Goose, ii. 258.
—— Beef, *id.*
Marygold, called Sunflower, ii. 159.
Mary (Virgin), Nativity of, ii. 164.
Mathematicians, i. 70 ; ii. 73, 74.
Mattachins, i. 236.
Maukin, i. 61.
Maunday Thursday, i. 179.
Maundy, Etymology of, i. 182.
Mawle, Holy, i. 306.
May-Day Evil, i. 256.
—— Festival, i. 225, 228.
—— forbidden by the Puritans, i. 247.
—— How to be kept, i. 266.
—— Superstitions, i. 244.
May-Fair, i. 250.
May, Lord and Lady of, i. 233, 234, 235.
May-Music, i. 267.
Mayor's, (Lord) Day, ii. 246.
—— Show, ii. 247.
—— Procession to the Court of Exchequer, ii. 204.
Mayor and Provost, Story of, i. 324.
May-Pole, i. 230, 241, 247, 248, 256, 257, 259.
May-Pole in LittleDrury, i. 289.
—— in the Strand, *id.*
Medemonath, ii. 2.
Mel, ii. 270.
Mendip Hills, ii. 273.
Metals, Transmutation of, i. 185.
Mete, ii. 72.
Michael (Saint) Apparition of, i. 270.
——, Account of, ii. 181.
Michaelmas Day, 181.
—— Singular custom on, ii. 189.
—— Superstition attached to, *id.*
Microcosmic Moon, i. 149.
Midlent-Sunday, i. 118.
Midsummer Eve, ii. 8.
Midsumermonath, ii. 2.
Midwintermonath, ii. 281.
Minstralx, Carta de Roy de, ii. 134.
Minstrels, King of, ii. 135.
Milkmaids on May-Day, i. 242.
Miller of Bodmin, i. 324.
Missi Dominici, i. 158.
Misletoe, i. 51, 116 ; ii. 276.
Mines how discovered, i. 29.
Mire-Crow, ii. 279.
Molanus, ii. 291.
Moloch, Sacrifices to, i. 229.
Money, how always to have money, ii. 278.
Monk (General), His marriage, i. 257.

MONTHS, The. January, i. 1—February, i. 49—March, i. 109—April, i. 161—May, i. 222—June, ii. 1—July, ii. 96—August, ii. 129—September, ii. 156—October, ii. 201—November, ii. 234—December, ii. 281
MOON-MEN, i. 80.
Moon, (New) Custom of, in Yorkshire, ii. 276.
—— Superstition of, i. 46. 309; ii. 189. 194. 276.
MORRIS DANCE, i. 235.
Morrow of a Fast, ii. 132.
Mother-Night, ii. 119, 299.
MOTHERING SUNDAY, i. 119.
MOTHER CHURCH, *id.*
MOTHER OF THE GODS, i. 119, 223.
MOUNTAIN OF VENUS, i. 152.
Mountebank's Stage, i. 252.
Mugwort, its Medical and Magical Virtues, ii. 29.

N—A common prefix, i. 310.
Nativity (Christ's), Date of, not known, i. 4.
—— of the Virgin Mary, ii. 164.
NEW STYLE, i. 112.
Newton (Sir Isaac), His account of the early Christians, ii. 299.
New Year's Day, i. 5.
—— Salutations, i. 6, 11.
—— Gifts, i. 12.
—— at Rome, i. 6.
—— Saint New Year's Day, i. 12.
New Year, Various times of its commencement, i. 4.
—— Chariot-races on, *id.*
—— Gifts among the Romans, i. 8.
—— Gifts forbidden by the Council of Auxerre, i. 10.
—— Gifts, Q. Elizabeth's passion for, i. 12.
Nicholas (Saint) His Vigil, ii. 282.
—— Secret gifts upon his eve, ii. 283.
—— Custom of certain convents, *id.*
—— Feast of, ii. 284.
—— Legend of, ii. 285, 296.
Nicolas, (St.) why the patron of scholars, ii. 296.
Nicolas, a name of the Boy-Bishop, ii. 294.
NIGHTINGALE, i. 165.
Noel, or Nowell, Various significations of, ii. 308.
—— a corruption of Gule, ii. 309.
Noise of Musicians, ii. 148.
Nortons, The Two, ii. 64.
NOSEGAYS, worn by the Morris Dancers, i. 240.
NOSTOCK, i. 208.
Nuts, Their religious import, ii. 215.

Oak-leaves, used by Druids, ii. 277.
Octave, explained, ii. 166.
Odd Numbers, i. 296, 298.
ODYLLE, or ODILO, (Saint,) ii. 259.
Offa, King of Mercia, ii. 128.
Offerings, Votive, forbidden in the New Testament, ii. 167.
OLD STYLE, i. 112.
Oliver, Rev. George, ii. 37.
Oliver, The, i. 285.
ONION, Sacred among the Egyptians, i. 11.
Onions, Divination by, i. 41, 45.
—— germinate at the wane of the moon, i. 47.
OPORINUS, i. 143.
Orpyn, Divination by, i. 210; ii. 27.
—— Superstition in regard to, i. 210.
Osith, Saint, ii. 271.
OSTER-MONAT, i. 163.
OWL at Cleves, i. 289.
OX, on Christmas Eve, ii. 305.

Palilia, ii. 12
PAN, Death of, ii. 194.
PANCAKE-MONTH, i. 49.
PANCAKE-BELL, i. 58.
—— Feasts, i. 68.
PANCAKE TUESDAY, i. 58.
PANCAKES, i. 63.
PANISCUS, i. 108.
PANTHEON, ii. 237.
PARASCENE, i. 174.
PARACELSUS, Life and Doctrines of, i. 194.

Partenopex de Blois, i. 92.
Pascha Floridum, i. 174.
Paschal Sabbath, i. 188.
—— Taper, i. 187.
Passage of the Virgin Mary, ii. 130.
Passion-Sunday, i. 119.
Passion-Week, i. 179.
Passover, i. 111.
Pater (Erra), His predictions, i. 42.
Paul's (Saint) Day, i. 43.
—— Prognostications on, *id.*
Pay his English, i. 313.
Peas, i. 126, 127.
—— Scadding of, ii. 266.
Peine Forte et Dure, ii. 334.
Pentecost, i. 276.
Perambulations, Parochial, i. 272, 275.
Peter Pence, ii. 126, 128.
Pewits, Superstition in regard to, ii. 279.
Pheasant Shooting, ii. 203.
Phenomena Natural;
—— in Cornwall, i. 203.
—— Helm-Wind, ii. 147, 148.
—— Helm-Bar, ii. 147, 150.
—— Bottom-Winds, ii. 151.
—— Bosom Winds, ii. 152.
—— of Primroses and Poppies, ii. 155.
Pie, its meaning and derivation, ii. 289.
Pie-Powder Courts, ii. 161.
Piper, Tom, how dressed, i. 239.
Places, deemed fatal, ii. 267.
Plants, Vulnerary, i. 291.
Pleroma, i. 147.
Plotinus, i. 221.
Plough, Fond or Fool, i. 33.
—— Women harnessed to, i. 35.
—— Men harnessed to, *id.*
—— Light, i. 37.
—— drawn about the fire, *id.*
Plough-Monday, i. 33.
Pneuma, ii. 289.
Plum-porridge, ii. 331.
Poculum-Charitatus, ii. 326.
Poisson d'Avril, i. 172.
Poison-Diet, i. 286.
Poor Henry, Poem of, i. 75.
Pope-Day, ii. 245.
Poppies, Phenomenon of, ii. 155.
Pordage, ii. 64, 66.
Pot, Gui, i. 78.
Prayer, Singular, ii. 190.
Priggers, i. 84.
Primroses, never grow in Bishop-stone, ii. 155.
Processionings on Saturdays, i. 34.
Prognostics of the Weather, i. 54.
Prosa, or Prose, ii. 289.
Proverbs, Three, i. 313.
Pryke, ii. 229.
Puppets, Beheading of, i. 253.
Purification; Lighted Candles carried on the day of, i. 38.
Pygmies, i. 152.
Pyne, ii. 237.
Pythagoras, ii. 68.
—— his Creed, ii. 75.
—— bound his followers to silence, ii. 94.
Pythægia, ii. 257.

Quarter Ale, i. 282.
Quintain, Played upon the water, i. 195.
Quintilis, ii. 97.
Quirinalia, i. 170.
Quarrels, i. 61.

Rabbit, White; Prognostic of Death, i. 208.
Ramsins, i. 305.
Rates, did not exist in Aubrey's time, i. 282.
Recheat, to blow a, ii. 138.
Refreshment Sunday, i. 119, 120.
Refrivæ, or Referivæ, i. 125.
Relief, its meaning, ii. 227.
Reliques, How the worship of, originated, ii. 300.
Respond, A; the meaning of, ii. 290.
Restoration-Day, i. 284.
Resurrection, Representation of, i. 192.
Revenans, i. 300.
Rhedmonath, i. 109.
Rhodo-Stauroticon, ii. 53.
Riding, Women's first use of the side-saddle in, ii. 274.

Ridings, ii. 248.
Ring (Wedding), Superstition, i. 244.
Rings Hallowed, i. 186.
Roast-Meat Clothes, ii. 333.
Robin Hood, Sports of, i. 232.
Rocking-Cakes, ii. 200.
Rod, Aaron's, i. 79.
Rogation Sunday, i. 271.
Rome-Feagh, ii. 126.
Roman Year, i. 1.
Rougeur D'Os, i. 383.
Rome-Scot, ii. 126.
Rose, its spiritual import, i. 121.
—— Sunday, i. 119, 120.
—— connected with Rosicrucianism, ii. 55.
—— why sacred to Venus, ii. 56.
—— fruit of the tree of life, *id.*
—— of alchemical import, ii. 57.
—— planted upon graves, ii. 274.
Rose Hill, i. 266.
Rosemary, i. 51.
Rosenkreuz Christian, ii. 44.
Rosæ Crux, whence derived, ii. 55.
Rosicrucianism, ii. 35.
—— First Account of, ii. 43.
Rosicrucians were Lutherans, ii. 50.
—— Lodges or Colleges, ii. 63.
—— Leaders in England, ii. 64.
—— Publications, *id.*
Ros, or Dew, ii. 57.
Rumbald, a Kentish Feast, ii. 303.
—— Meaning of the word, ii. 304.
—— Whitings, ii. 303.
Round about our Coal-Fire, i. 280.
Rye of Pease, ii. 138.

Saba, Queen, ii. 59.
Sacramental Cup, ii. 337.
Sacred Year, i. 111.
Sagum, ii. 277.
Saints (All) Day, ii. 235.
—— removed, i. 285.
St. John's Wort, i. 291.
—— Saint Distaff's Day, i. 32.
—— Agnes, or Hagnes, i. 38.
—— Agnes' Eve, Divinations on, i. 41.
—— Anne's Eve, Divinations on, *id.*
St. Paul's Day, Prognostics on, i. 42.
—— Nicolas, Vigil of, ii. 282.
—— Gifts to children and nuns, ii. 283.
—— Feast of, ii. 284.
—— Legend of, ii. 285.
—— his tomb sweated oil, ii. 286.
—— the Boy Bishop, ii. 294.
—— why the patron of scholars, ii. 296.
—— Simon and Jude, ii. 215.
—— Martin, ii. 255.
—— Clement, ii. 260.
—— Crispin and Crispianus, ii. 212.
—— Andrew's Day, ii. 263.
—— Thomas' Day, ii. 297.
—— Luke, his Day, ii. 209.
—— Luke, the patron of horned cattle, ii. 211.
—— Luke, painted with an ox at his side, *id.*
—— David, i. 113.
—— Patrick, i. 115.
—— Distaff or Rock, i. 32.
—— Paul, i. 42.
—— David's Day, i. 113.
—— Patrick's Day, i. 115.
—— Patrick, Order of, i. 118.
—— Cuthbert, i. 128.
—— Mark's Day or Eve, i. 197.
—— Austle, Parish of, i. 203.
—— John the Baptist, Eve of, ii. 8.
—— Peter, Seven Festivals of, ii. 20.
—— Swithin, ii. 102.
—— Peter ad Vincula, ii. 122.
—— Osith, or Sythe, ii. 271.
—— Richard, tutelar patron of the Salt Well, *id.*
—— Antonie-Pigs, ii. 272.
—— New-Year's Day, i. 12.
—— Michael, Apparition of, i. 270.
—— Odylle, or Odilo, ii. 239
Saints often raised the dead, ii. 255.
—— Invocation of Saints—how it originated, ii. 300.
—— Patrons of different classes, ii. 182, 187.
—— Protectors against various diseases, &c. ii. 182.

SALERNO, famous for its Medical School, i. 76.
SALKELD, Curious Remains at, i. 294.
Salt, a charm against evil spirits, i. 311.
—— The falling of, ii. 278.
SALTATIO PYRRHICA, i. 236.
Sapientes, or Sophis, ii. 63.
Sarum, Monument in the cathedral of, ii. 287.
SATYRISCI, i. 108.
Say, ii. 21.
Scadding of Peas, ii. 266.
SCALDS AND BURNS, i. 205.
School of the Angles, ii. 126.
SCOT-ALES, i. 282.
Sea, Custom at, ii. 265.
Seasons, Astronomical, ii. 281.
—— Popular, *id.*
SEEK, to blow a, ii. 138.
Sengyll, ii. 138
SENNERT, i. 135.
Sephiroths, ii. 76.
Septenary, i. 296, 298.
Sequents, or Sequentia, ii. 289.
Seremonath, ii. 96.
Serpent Eggs, ii. 33.
Seven Sleepers, Legend of, ii. 104.
—— Cavern of, ii. 293.
Shale, i. 305.
SHAMROCK, i. 117.
Shaving of Priests, ii. 265.
—— Sunday, ii. 273.
SHEEP, THE GOLDEN-FLEECED, i. 103.
SHEPHERD'S MARKET, i. 250.
SHEERE, or SHERE, the meaning of, i. 181.
SHERE THURSDAY, *id.*
SHONY, ii. 217.
SHROVE TUESDAY, i. 58.
Side-saddle, when first used by women, ii. 274.
Sieve and Shears, i. 306.
SILENUS, i. 177.
Silly How, i. 311.
SIMON, (Saint) his day, ii. 215.
SITH, ii. 220.
SKIBBS, ii. 250.
SLAIGHTS, i. 282.
Sleepers, the Seven, ii. 104.
Smithfield, whence derived, ii. 160.
—— at one time called "The Elms," ii. 161.
SNAILS, Superstition in regard to, i. 244.
Snake-stones, ii. 32.
—— Eggs, ii. 33.
Snakes, their Meetings, ii. 32.
SNAP DRAGON, its magical qualities, i. 245.
Solmonath, i. 49; ii. 96.
Solomon's house, ii. 44.
Solomon, a Rosicrucian, *id.*
Solstice, Summer, ii. 8.
—— Winter, i. 2.
Solstices, the head and tail of the dragon, ii. 10.
Solstitialis, ii. 2.
SOULS, ALL, ii. 238.
SOUL-CAKES, ii. 244, 245.
SOUL-MASS CAKES, *id.*
SPIRITS, i. 151.
Spring, Astronomical and Popular, ii. 281.
SPORTS, BOOK OF, ordered to be burnt, i. 248.
—— King's Declaration concerning, i. 266.
SPROUT KELE, i. 49.
SQUINANSY, i. 73.
S. S. Collars, ii. 253.
Staffordshire, Pewits in, ii. 279.
STANLEY, Venezia, i. 287.
STARS, FALLING, i. 208.
STEPHEN'S (SAINT) DAY, Horses bled on, ii. 315.
—— Sword dance on, ii. 316.
—— Goose upon, ii. 316.
—— Boxing upon, ii. 318.
Stoke Verdon, ii. 211.
STOLE, WHITE, i. 193.
Stonehenge, i. 293.
Stork (The), uses salt-water as a medicine, i. 156.
STRONG WOMAN, i. 253.
STYLE, Old and New, i. 112.
Subdeacons, Feast of, i. 14.
Suitors, i. 325.
Summer, Astronomical and Popular, ii. 282.
Summer Solstice, ii. 8.
SUN, dancing on Easter-Day, i. 191.

Sunday, Midlent, i. 118.
—— Mothering, i. 119.
Sunday, Rose, i. 119, 120.
—— Lætare, i. 119, 121.
—— Care, or Carl, i. 119, 121, 123.
—— Passion, i. 119.
—— Refreshment, i. 119, 120.
—— Palm, i. 174.
—— Goode's, i. 188.
—— Rogation, i. 271.
—— Whit, i. 276.
—— Trinity, i. 285.
—— Shaving on, ii. 273.
Sunflower, called Marygold, ii. 159.
Superstitions.
—— in regard to Apple Trees, i. 19.
—— Drawing lots, ii. 24, 64.
—— Divinations of Midsummer's Eve, ii. 25, 27.
—— of Artemisia or Mugwort, ii. 28, 29.
—— of Fern, ii. 30.
—— of the Dumb Cake, ii. 31.
—— of Hempseed, ii. 32.
—— of Snakes, *id.*
—— on St. Anne's Eve, i. 41.
—— on St. Agnes' Eve, *id.*
—— on St. Paul's Day, i. 42.
—— in Advent, i. 45.
—— of the Moon, i. 46.
—— of Spayed Bitches, i. 47.
—— of Waffs or Whiffs, ii. 117.
—— of Bad Prayers, *id.*
Superstitions, Popular.
—— of Scalds and Burns, i. 205.
—— of Cuckoos, *id.*
—— of the King's Evil, i. 206.
—— of the White-breasted Bird, *id.*
—— of Brereton, *id.*
—— of the Buckland Hag, i. 207.
—— of Falling Stars, i. 208.
—— of White Rabbits, *id.*
—— of Malkin Tower, i. 209.
—— of discovering Mines, *id.*
—— of Midsummer Men, i. 210.
—— of Waffs, Whiffs, or Swarths, *id.*
—— of Thunder, *id.*
—— of Fairy Darts, *id.*
—— of May-day, i. 244.
Superstitions, Popular.
—— of Cinque-foil, i. 245.
—— of Lamb on Ascension Day, i. 275.
—— of Eggs on Ascension Day, *id.*
—— of the Basilisk, i. 288.
—— of Women standing bare in storms, i. 289.
—— of Frogs, *id.*
—— of the Owl, *id.*
—— of Vulnerary Plants, i. 291.
—— of Ghost Seers, *id.*
—— of St. John's Wort and Vervain, *id.*
—— of a Pool near N. Taunton, i. 293.
—— of Numbers, *id.*
—— of Les Hans, i. 300.
—— of Revenans, *id.*
—— Fifollets, i. 301.
—— Letiches, *id.*
—— Lubins, *id.*
—— Goblin, *id.*
—— Loup Garon, i. 302.
—— Rongeur D'os, i. 303.
—— La Fete Saint Loup, *id.*
—— in North Wiltshire, i. 304.
—— of choosing Valentines, i. 305.
—— of Lide and Ramsins, *id.*
—— of Onions, i. 44, 45, 47.
—— how to raise the Wind, i. 305.
—— of the Teeth, *id.*
—— of Hares, i. 306.
—— of the Holy Mawle, *id.*
—— of the Sieve and Shears, *id.*
—— of Magpies, *id.*
—— of Running Streams, *id.*
—— of Horses hag-ridden, *id.*
—— of Thief in a Candle, *id.*
—— of Whinny Moor, i. 307.
—— of the New Moon, i. 309.
—— of Invisible Beans, *id.*
—— of Thunder, i. 310.
—— of Horseshoes, *id.*
—— of Invisibility, *id.*
—— of the Silfy-How, i. 311.
—— of Salt, *id.*
—— of Unlucky Hours, *id.*
—— Spell against Hydrophobia, *id.*
—— of the Jews as to Houses, ii. 265.

SUPERSTITIONS, POPULAR.
—— in regard to the Sea, *id.*
—— of signing with the Cross, ii. 266.
—— of Places deemed fatal, ii. 267.
—— a Charm against Thunder, ii. 270.
—— in regard to Ashes, ii. 271.
—— of Magpies, *id.*
—— of Invisibility, ii. 275.
—— of seeing Lovers, ii. 275, 276.
—— of Dumb Cakes, ii. 31, 276.
—— of the New Moon in Yorkshire, ii. 276.
—— of the Mistletoe, *id.*
—— of black Cats, ii. 278.
—— of the falling of Salt, *id.*
—— of Fairies, *id.*
—— of Pewits, ii. 279.
—— of the Ox on Christmas Eve, ii. 305.
Swanimote, ii. 237.
SWARTH, i. 210.
SWITHIN (Saint), ii. 103.
SYLPHS, i. 151.
Symbols, the practice of, whence derived, ii. 61.
Symmachus, ii. 185.
Symposiarch, how elected, i. 29.
Synod, Constantinopolitan in 867, i. 295.
Synodals, ii. 290.

TÆNAROS, i. 105.
Talus, i. 8.
Tansy Cakes, i. 196.
Tantonie Pigs, ii. 272.
Teend (To), ii. 302.
Teeth, i. 305.
Templars, ii. 72, 73.
TEMPESTS, Origin of, i. 154.
TENEBRÆ, i. 179, 180.
TERMINALIA, i. 272.
THAMUS, the Pilot, ii. 195.
Theodoretus, ii. 57.
Theophylact, introduces Feast of Fools, i. 13.
—— His death, i. 14.
Thirteen, a bad Omen, i. 299.
Thomas (St) Day, ii. 297.
THRESHING THE FAT HEN, i. 65.
Thrift, worn by the Morris Dancers, i. 240.
THUNDER, i. 210. 310.
—— charm against, ii. 270.
TIDDY DOLL, i. 254.
TIM TATTERS, i. 60.
TIMYCHA, Story of, i. 126.
TOASTS, origin of, ii. 330.
Toledo, Council of, i. 11.
TOWN-WAITS, i. 65.
Transfiguration, ii. 130.
TRANSMUTATION OF METALS, i. 135.
TRAVERS, i. 186.
TRARAMES, i. 155.
TREASURE-SEEKING, i. 153.
Trefoil, i. 116.
Trilidi, ii. 120.
TRUCKLE-CHEESE, i. 57.
Trullum, or Trullan Council, ii. 25.
Tutbury, Bull Running at, ii. 132, 140.
——, custom of the Flitch of Bacon at, ii. 226.
TUCK, FRIAR, i. 235.
—— his Dress, i. 238.
Twelfth-Day, Eve of, i. 18.
—— why so called, i. 19.
—— or Epiphany, i. 21.
Twelfth-Night, i. 29.
Tythes, originated with Saint Swithin, ii. 103.

Ule. See Yule.
Unlucky Hours, i. 311.
Utter Barristers, ii. 324.

VALENTINE, SAINT, i. 55.
VALENTINE'S DAY, *id.*
Valentines, how to choose, i. 305.
Vasudeva, i. 26.
VENUS, MOUNTAIN OF, i. 152.
Verses, Meaning of, ii. 290.
Vervain, i. 291.
VESUVIUS, a vomitory of hell, ii. 211.
Vetula, Game of, i. 11.
Vigilantius, ii. 307.
Vigil, explained, ii. 166.
VIGILS, People sate up all night on, i. 282.

Virgin Mary, Assumption of, ii. 131.
—— Nativity of, ii. 164.
—— Conception of, ii. 296.
Voltaire, his attacks on Shakspeare, i. 216.
Vulcan, Isle of, ii. 241.

Waff or Whiff, i. 210.
Waits, ii. 252. 311.
Walnuts used at Weddings, ii. 216.
Ward, John, ii. 190.
Wassailing in Herefordshire, i. 19.
Wassel-Bowl, ii. 326. 329.
Was-Hael, of Saxon origin, ii. 325.
—— how derived, ii. 329.
Water-Prognostics, i. 293.
Watch, City, ii. 18.
Weedmonath, ii. 2, 96, 119.
Well, Lady Nant's, i. 179.
Well-worship, ii. 271.
Were-Wolf, i. 301.
Weydmonath, ii. 2.
Wheel, how a symbol of the sun's descent, ii. 17.
Whichnor, Whichenour, Manor of, ii. 228.
Whiffler, explained, ii. 19.
Whiffs, etymology of, ii. 117. 250.
Whinny Moor, i. 307.
Whiskins, i. 90.
White-Plough, i. 33.
Whitsun-Ales, i. 278.
Whitsuntide, i. 276.
Will o' the Wisp, i. 301.
Willow, substituted for Palm, i. 177.
Winds, Helm, ii. 147, 148.
—— Bottom, ii. 151.
—— Bosom, ii. 152.
Winter, Astronomical and Popular, ii. 28.
Winterfylleth, ii. 120.
Wintermonath, ii. 281.
Winter Solstice, i. 2.
Wint or Wind Monath, ii. 234.
With, i. 178.
Woedmonath, ii. 2.
Wolfmonat, i. 4.
Woman, Strong, i. 253.
Women, a charm against lightning, i. 288.
Woodmasters, ii. 137.
Woodmote-Court, ii. 136.
Woodward, ii. 137.
Worthies, the Nine, ii. 337.
—— Female, ii. 339.
Wren, burying of the, ii. 304.
Wynmonath, ii. 97.

Y—A common prefix, i. 310.
Year, Sacred, i. 111.
—— Civil, *id.*
—— Historical, *id.*
—— Embolismal,
—— Roman, i. 1.
—— New, different times of its commencement, i. 4. 111.
—— Seasons of, i. 281.
—— Eve, ii. 327.
Yeomen's Daughters, i. 84.
Yew, i. 178.
Yole. See Yule.
Youle, i. 305.
Yule, i. 8, 229; ii. 122, 125. 309.
—— Brand, i. 51.
—— Clog, or Log, i. 51; ii. 301, 302.
Yule-Dough, ii. 332.
Yuling-Sop, i. 273.

Zephyrinus, ii. 335.
Zoroaster, his prediction respecting Christ, i. 24, 26.

NEW

CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

THE MONTHS—JANUARY.

This month takes its name from the Latin Januarius, which itself was derived from Janus, the two-faced God, who looked both before and behind, and hence was chosen by Numa as typifying the New Year, that stood between the past and the future, and might thus be said to look both ways at once.* Prior to the time of this monarch the Roman year had but ten months, and commenced with March; but he added January and February, making it begin with January, though the months, quintilis, sextilis, &c. still retained their old designations, as if no change had taken place in the Roman calendar.†

* "In duos novos menses pari ratione divisit, ac de duobus priorem Januarium nuncupavit, primumque anni esse voluit, tanquam bicipitis Dei mensem, respicientem ac prospicientem transacti anni finem futurique principia."—*Aur. Macrobii Saturnal.* Lib. i. cap. xiii. p. 263.

† 'Ρομαῖοι δὲ ὅτι μὲν δέκα μῆνας εἰς τὸν ἐνιαυτόν ἔταττον, ὁ δώδεκα, τεκμήριον ἡ τοῦ τελευταίου προσηγορία, δέκατον γὰρ αὐτὸν ἄχρι νῦν καλοῦσιν. ὅτι δὲ τὸν Μάρτιον πρῶτον, ἡ τάξις ἐκδηλοῖ· τὸν γὰρ ἀπ' ἐκείνου πέμπτον, ἑκάλουν πέμπτον· ἕκτον δὲ τον ἕκτον

It may seem strange that Romulus should have made the year begin with winter, and not with spring, which, as the opener of all things, would more naturally seem to be its commencement. To this doubt Ovid has returned an ingenious, though perhaps not a very satisfactory answer, through the mouth of his God, Janus:—"The Winter Solstice is the first of the new sun, and the ast of the old; the year and the sun have the same origin."* It may be permitted to us to doubt whether the office, which Ovid himself has assigned to Janus, would not better account for his being placed at the head of the months; he was the door-keeper of heaven and earth,† Jupiter himself could not go in or out unless he opened the door for him, and thus he seems naturally enough to have been the porter, opening the gates of time to the

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καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐφεξῆς ὁμοίως ἕκαστον. Ἐπεὶ τὸν Ἰανυάριον (καὶ τὸν Φεβρυάριον) πρὸ τῆ Μαρτίᾳ τιθεμένοις συνέβαινεν αὐτοῖς τὸν εἰρημένον μῆνα, πέμπτον μὲν ὀνομάζειν, ἕβδομον δ' ἀριθμεῖν."—"That the Romans divided the year into ten months, and not into twelve, is proved by the name of the last month, for they called it the *tenth*; that March was the first of them is proved by their order, since the fifth from March is called Quintilis,—the sixth, Sextilis,—and so for the rest. Now if they had added January (and February) to March, the Quintilis would have been called the seventh." PLUTARCHI NUMA, p. 286. Tom. i.—Editio Reiskii. *Alexander ab Alexandro*, however, says—"Januarius Junoni esset sacer."—January was sacred to Juno.—GENIALES DIES, Lib. iii. cap. 24, p. 835.

* "Bruma novi prima est, veterisque novissima solis;
Principium capiunt Phœbus et annus idem."
FASTORUM, Lib. i. v. 163.

† "Me penes est unum vasti custodia mundi
Et jus vertendi cardinis omne meum est.
* * * * *
Præsideo foribus cœli cum mitibus Horis;
It, redit, officio Jupiter ipse meo."
Idem, v. 119—125.

New Year. Plutarch, however, has adduced other reasons. He firsts suggests that Numa, who was a lover of peace and its attendant arts, might have dedicated the beginning of the year to Janus, as being a God more favourable to civil institutions and the cultivation of the soil than to war;* at the same time he is more inclined to believe Numa made this choice from the fact that the sun, having completed his advance and now retrograding, there is also a certain change in nature, the nights being diminished in duration and the days encreased.†

If it be difficult to choose amongst these reasons, it seems yet harder to say why the Christians should have chosen this month in the early ages as the commencement of their year. Baronius, in his *Martyrology*, supposes that they did so because about this time Christ was born, and by his rising illuminated as it were the world,

* Νομᾶς δ' αὖθις εἰρηνικὸς γενόμενος, καὶ πρὸς ἔργα τῆς γῆς φιλοτιμούμενος τρέπσαι τὴν πόλιν, ἀποστῆσαι δὲ τῶν πολεμικῶν, τῷ Ἰανεαρίῳ τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἔδωκε, καὶ τὸν Ἰανόν εἰς τιμὰς προήγαγε μεγάλας ὡς πολιτικὸν καὶ γεωργικὸν μᾶλλον ἢ πολεμικὸν γενόμενον." PLUTARCHI QUÆSTIONES ROMANÆ. Q. 19, p. 86, tom. vii. *Edit. Reiskii.*—p. 67. tom. ii. *Editio Wyttenbachii.* "Numa on the other hand, who was fond of peace, and desirous of directing the attention of the city to agriculture while he turned it from war, assigned the first place to January, and gave great honour to Janus, as being more given to civil and agricultural pursuits than to arms."

† "Ἀριστα δὲ οἱ τὴν μετὰ τροπὰς χειμερίας λαμβάνοντες, ὑπηνίκα τῷ πρόσω βαδίζειν πεπαυμένος ὁ ἥλιος ἐπιστρέφει καὶ ἀνακάμπτει πάλιν πρὸς ἡμᾶς. γίνεται γὰρ αὐτοῖς τρόπον τινὰ καὶ φύσει, τὸν μὲν τῷ φωτὸς αὔξησα χρόνον ἡμῖν, μειώσα δὲ τὸν τῷ σκότους, ἐγγυτέρω δὲ ποιῆσα τὸν κύριον καὶ ἡγεμόνα τῆς ρευστης ὑσίας ἁπάσης." Id. p. 68, *Wyttenbachii.* 86, *Reiskii.* "But they do best, who commence the year with the winter solstice, when the sun, having ceased to advance, turns back, and directs his course again towards us. For then there is a revolution, as it were, in nature, which encreases the time of light, lessens that of darkness, and brings nearer to us the Lord and principle of all moving nature."

till then obscured by darkness.* To such puerile babbling, it is only necessary to reply that it is far from being certain in what month Christ was born, and in the absence of any better guide we may safely infer that the Christians adapted this æra, as they did so many of their customs, from the heathens, without any reasoning upon the matter. Why should they not have done so?

But though in the first instance the Roman mode of computation prevailed, yet this was far from being fixed or general. The New Year has at different times and places commenced on Christmas Day, i. e. the 25th of December; on the Day of the Circumcision, i. e. the 1st of January; on the Day of the Conception, i. e. the 25th of March; and on Easter Day, or the day of the Resurrection; nor was it till a comparatively recent period that a general rule was adopted.

By the Anglo-Saxons this month was named *Wolfmonat*, and *Giuli Aftera*. The first of these names it received "because people are wont always in that month to be in more danger to be devoured of wolves than in any season else of the year; for that through the extremity of cold and snow these ravenous creatures could not find of other beasts sufficient to feed upon."† It was called, *Giuli Aftera*, as being immediately after, or second to, Christmas. The derivation of this word will be found in its proper place hereafter, when I shall have occasion to speak of the summer solstice.

The principal vegetable productions of this season are the various mosses. The *Early Moss* may now be gathered; the *Yellow Tremella* is seen on palings, rotten wood,

* "Quòd his fermè diebus novus Sol, ipse Christus, redemptor noster, mundo offuso tenebris, nascès, illuxit." — MARTYROLOGIUM ROMANUM—*Kalendis Januarii.*

† VERSTEGAN'S RESTITUTION OF DECAYED INTELLIGENCE, p. 61, 8vo. London, 1673.

&c. and both the *Straight Screw Moss* and the *Hygrometic Moss* are in fructuation. But these are not the only signs of vegetable life independent of the few herbs and greens grown for culinary purposes in the garden; the *Laurestine*, the *White Butterbur*, and the *Christmas Rose*, all flower at different periods of the month, and about the time of its drawing to a close a single snow-drop may be occasionally seen; or, if the year be very mild, a primrose will peep out upon a warm bank.

Even after the middle of January considerable flocks of fieldfares may be seen; but, as it yet farther advances, the severity of the season encreases, and the wild quadrupeds are driven from their accustomed haunts. Hares enter the gardens to browze on the few remaining vegetables, and the foxes are more than usually bold in plundering the hen-roosts.

THE CIRCUMCISION; NEW YEAR'S DAY.—*January* 1st.—The festival of the Circumcision is, comparatively speaking, of modern date; no mention of such an observance being made by the antient fathers of the church, nor does it occur in Saint Isidore or any similar writer. Baronius too confirms this notion by observing that this day is indeed called both the *Circumcision* and the *Octave of the Nativity*, but that in the antient manuscripts it has the latter name only.*

The New Year has been from time immemorial, what it now is, one of those resting points in life, at which by a happy delusion men persuade themselves the current of things is about to change with them for the better. It is welcomed like a new sovereign, till a very brief experience suffices to teach us that the reign of the one and

* "Et Circumcisio Domini, et Nativitatis Octava, dicitur. In antiquis manuscriptis nonnunquã titulo tantum Octavæ Natalis Domini pronotatus hic dies legitur."—MARTYROLOG. ROMANUM—*Kalendis Januarii.*

the advent of the other have made but very little real alteration, or it may even be an alteration for the worse. All this however does not prevent hope from playing the same game as the season comes round again, so that we are perpetually wishing each other "a happy new year!" a custom which existed among the Romans, and may probably boast of a much higher antiquity. We have the fact recorded by Ovid, who in a friendly dialogue between himself and Janus, asks the reason of such an observance, to which the communicative God replies, leaning familiarly on his stick as one disposed for a gossip, — "omens are attached to the commencement of all things; it is the first sound you hear, the first bird you see, *that* becomes an omen."* The reasoning of the deity may not be the most convincing, but the fact of the New Year's salutation is proved by the question of the poet.†

New Year's Day has in all ages, and among all people, been a time of rejoicing. Libanius, the rhetorician, has left us a vivid account of the manner in which it was celebrated among the Romans, and as the greater part of our New Year's customs have come to us from that source, a brief epitome of his amusing pages will scarcely be thought irrelevant to our present purpose.‡

He sets out with informing us that all men love holydays, an assertion which few will be inclined to dispute;

* "Tum Deus incumbens baculo, quem dextra gerebat,
Omina principiis, inquit, inesse solent.
Ad primam vocem timidas advertitis aures,
Et primùm visum consulit augur avem."
OVIDII FASTI, Lib. I. v. 177.

† "At cur læta tuis dicuntur verba Calendis
Et damus alternas accipimusque preces?"
OVIDII FASTI——Lib. I. v. 175.

‡ Λιβανίου σοφιστοῦ Ἐκφράσεις—Ἔκφρασις Καλανδῶν—LIBANII ORATIONES ET DECLAMATIONES. *Jac. Reiske*, ed.—vol iv. p. 1053.

and then adds, that there are four kinds of festivals—the first, peculiar to families; the second, to cities; the third, to nations; and a fourth, common to all the people living under the Roman empire, and which takes place when the old year has ended, and the new one has begun. On the day before the calends the whole city was in a fever of expectation, and as the evening advanced a jubilee prevailed among all classes, the forum being crowded with people. Presents too of all kinds might be seen passing to and fro in every quarter of the city, some for ornament, and others for the table; some from the rich to the poor, and others from the poor to the rich; some amongst the wealthy classes, and others in like manner among those who had little to give, but who loved the old custom too well to let it pass by unhonoured.

But this merry-making by day would seem to have been little more than a prologue, though a very jovial one, to the revel that followed sunset. Deep in the night all was song and dance, laugh and jest, both in the streets and at home; no one thought of sleeping: or, if any drowsy folks were so inclined to offend against the laws of good fellowship, they were quickly taught that the liberty of rest and quiet was the only liberty not allowed at such a season. The obstreperous revellers would knock long and loudly at their doors; and, the more angry they were, the greater was the delight of their tormentors as well as of the casual passers-by, who thought the joke much too good to be interrupted.

It is probable that these previous, or introductory, festivities were not capable of much augmentation, yet still it was with day-break that the real business of the season may be said to have commenced. The columns and porches of the houses were wreathed with laurel or other green branches, and troops of gay companions might be

seen, clad for the most part in purple, and bearing small torches, who accompanied with acclamations some rich man* on horseback to the shrines and temples. Servants followed and scattered gold amongst the people, so that a constant scramble was kept up to the great amusement of all parties.

Having performed the usual sacrifices to the Gods, they then went round to the magistrates, and bestowed New Year's gifts upon their servants. But this was all done openly, the money passing through the hands of those in office to their subordinates, and the former kissing the person to whom he presented the intended gift. Others imitated this example; gold flowed about freely on all sides; and the revelry in consequence soon reached its height, for at a time like this there were few hoarders amongst any class. So ended the first day.

On the second day the festival assumed another character. There was now no more exchanging of gifts, people for the most part remaining at home, while masters and servants played promiscuously at dice and cockal,† all ranks being levelled for the season;‡ and, what per-

* In the Greek it is "*ἀνὸρα ἱπποτρόφον*," *one who breeds horses*, a curious phrase, as seeming to indicate that the breeding of horses was the occupation of men of rank and fortune. Reiske, who explains it by *einen reichen und vornehmen Mann*, says that Libanius alludes to the consul.

† COCKAL is a game in which four pastern bones of certain animals properly marked were thrown like dice; and hence among the Romans it had the name of TALUS, which signifies the pastern-bone of a beast. How it ever came to be called *cockal* or *huckel-bone* by us is more than I can account for, these words alluding to a very different part of the animal anatomy.

‡ This was imitated even by the clergy in their DECEMBER LIBERTIES—*Libertas Decembrica*.—"Sunt nonnullæ ecclesiæ, in quibus usitatum est ut vel etiam episcopi et archiepiscopi in Cœnobiis cum suis ludant subditis, ita ut etiam sese ad lusum pilæ demittunt. Atque hæc quidem libertas ideo dicta est Decembrica, quòd olim apud

haps the latter valued as a higher privilege, they might be drunk or lazy without the slightest fear of punishment.

On the third day were the chariot-races, which produced an agreeable variety not only by the courses themselves, but by the disputes to which they gave rise. The hippodrome was crowded, and in it for the greater convenience of the people were baths and dice-tables, so that night as well as day was passed in riot.

The fourth day somewhat diminished the excesses of the festival, though even the fifth did not quite put an end to them; people still continued lingering about the flesh-pots of Egypt, and it was only slowly and reluctantly that they at length returned to their usual occupation.

This is the substance of what has been recorded by Libanius; and it is useful to be borne in mind, the New Year festival of the Romans being unquestionably the origin of the same festival among the early Christians. That it was imported into Britain with the new religion seems highly probable; but at the same time we must not forget that the Mithraic worship of the Hindoos had a kindred ceremony in the *huli*, though at a different season, and that there was an undeniable connection between Druidism and the creed of Mithra. It is possible therefore that at least a part of these festal customs may have existed in Britain, together with Druidism, long before the introduction of Christianity among us, though it would be put down by the Romans to the utmost of their power upon their invasion of the island. From political motives they sought to extirpate the Druids, and abolish everything that could serve to keep the people in mind of them, for in the ruling religion they found the most determined obstacle to all

ethnicos moris fuerit ut hoc mense servi et ancillæ, et pastores, velut quadam libertate donarentur, fierentque cum dominis suis pari conditione, communia festa agentes post collectionem messium. Beletus De Divin. Offic. Cap. 120.

their views of conquest. For a long time it kept up the spirit of the people, who like the followers of Mahomet, the soldiers of the Crusade, or the fanatics of Cromwell, felt convinced that they were fighting not only their own battles, but the battles of the deity.

Whencesoever derived, these customs gave great offence to the early Fathers of the Church as Christianity became more firmly established and they felt themselves in a position to dictate. But though to make the heathens abandon their Gods was comparatively speaking an easy matter, it seems to have been a very different thing when in the sour and jealous spirit of fanaticism they took up arms against the popular amusements. They then found the people much more zealous for their pleasures than they had been for their deities. They persisted however; denouncing all such observances in their sermons, and prohibiting them by their canons, under penalty of expulsion from the bosom of the Church. With more zeal than discretion they forbade the decorating of houses with laurel,* and made it a capital sin for men to masquerade in female attire, or for women to assume the dress of men. Nay, even the *cantilenæ* and the *commessationes*—the public carolling and feasting—were put under the ban ecclesiastic; and to make their point yet more sure, the zealous fathers ordained the observance of a fast. For the same reason the strenæ, or new-year's gifts, were forbidden by the Council of Auxerre in 614, which stigmatized them as diabolical; but though these prohibitions do not appear to have done much good at the time, yet they have taught us many customs, of which we otherwise should most probably

* "Ex Græcorum Synodis Martinus Bracharen. collect. c. 73, recitat vetitum esse Christianis ea Kalendarū die viridi lauro vel aliis virentibus arborū ramis ornare domos." MARTYROLOGIUM ROMANUM. *Kalendis Januarii.*

have known little or nothing. Thus the canon which forbids the profane GAME OF FAWN *(cervulus or cervula)* and the no less wicked CALF-GAME *(vetula)* punishing the offenders with a three years' penance, conveys a valuable hint to antiquarians, and hence we learn that it was the Roman practice on the ides of January to assume as far as possible the shapes of various animals, and run about the streets in wild imitation of their voice and action.* In this custom, moreover, we trace the evident origin of the hobby and the dragon that used at one time to figure in our own sports at certain seasons.

It does not, however, appear that these efforts of the ancient fathers of the Church, to substitute fasting for feasting, and mortification for merriment, were very generally successful. The old customs were too deeply rooted in the hearts of the people to be eradicated by sermons or synods, and the most they could do was to give something of a Christian colour to things that were still essentially Pagan. We shall have occasion hereafter to observe how much succeeding Popes improved upon this plan.†

* CONCILIUM TOLETANUM IV. Canon 10. Isidore tells us that to put a stop to these amusements the Church ordered a general fast; "Proinde ergo sancti patres, considerantes maximam partem generis humani eodem die hujusmodi sacrilegiis ac luxuriis insidere, statuerunt in universo mundo per omnes ecclesias publicum jejunium." ISIDORI OPERA, *De Officiis Eccles.*, lib. 1, cap. xl.

† There is a curious passage to this effect in Hospinian. "Omnes enim illæ superstitiones ethnicæ, quas lib. de Festis Ethnicorum in Calendis Januar. commemoravimus, et olim hoc die sunt observatæ a Christianis, et etiamnum hodie pertinaciter observantur a nobis. Discurrunt namque noctu tam senes quam juvenes promiscui sexus cantantes præ foribus divitum quibus felicem annum cantando precantur et optant. Hoc autem quum noctu fiat nemini dubium esse debet quin sub hoc prætextu multa obscœna et turpia perpetrantur simul. Eade nocte plurimi mensam varii generis epulis parant et ornant, putantes se per totum anni spatium tale ciborum abundantiâ habituros.

At one time the custom of New Years' gifts prevailed amongst all classes in this country, even the sovereigns both giving and receiving them, though of course their practice was more generally in the latter way. The virgin Queen was more especially noted, like Cassius, for having "an itching palm," that loved to be tickled with gold, or gold's worth, come from what quarter it might; and Nichols has given a curious as well as extensive list of them,* from which it may be as well to transcribe a few items only by way of specimen—"Money (sometimes to the amount of twenty pounds) diamonds, pearls, petticoats, smocks, garters, fans, pots of preserves, marchpanes, and sweet waters. The loyal donors of these commodities were archbishops, bishops, peers, peeresses, doctors, cooks, and even dustmen, a gentleman of the last named occupation having presented her Majesty with "two boltes of Cambrick." The practice may be traced back to the time of Henry the Fourth, but the only remains now at court are that "the two chaplains in waiting on New Year's Day have each a crown piece laid under their plates at dinner."†

In Westmoreland and Cumberland a singular trace of the olden time is yet found to linger. In these counties

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Alii poculum plenum aqua vel vino in mensa ponunt, quod, si exundet et ultra margines poculi intumescat, fertilitatem; sin minus caritatem ejus anni ominantur; quam consuetudinem D. Hieronymus, lib. 18 in Isaiam, indicat veterem fuisse idolatriam apud Ethnicos in cunctis urbibus, maximè verò in Egypto et Alexandria. Totus *die*, per omnes urbes, vicos, et compita, compotationibus, commessationibusque, non solum in publicis, sed etiam privatis ædibus consumitur non sine choreis saltationibusque impudentissimis." *Hospinian* De Festis Christianorum, p. 32; folio; Tiguri. 1612.

* Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, p. xxvi. of Preface. vol. 1, 4to., Lond. 1788.

† Idem., p. xxviii.

the first of January is by some odd process converted into a saint, and termed Saint New Year's Day, much, we may suppose, upon the same principle that the journeymen in other places have their Saint Monday. Early in the morning the dregs of the people assemble with stangs,—that is, poles,—and baskets, and whatever unlucky inhabitant or stranger chances to cross their way, he is compelled to do homage to their saint, or submit to the penalty which old custom has long sanctioned in all such cases of disobedience. If the recusant be a man, he is mounted astride the pole; if a woman, she is placed in the basket; and either offender is in this state carried upon the shoulders of the merry mob to the nearest public-house, where sixpence is exacted as the price of liberty. With laudable impartiality the like penance is inflicted upon all ranks and conditions, the squire or the parson being no more exempted from it than their own servants, and in the same spirit of equality the revellers will allow of no working on their saint's day; the rest of the world must be as idle and as jovial as themselves.*

The uncertainty of the day to which some feasts belong, the date of their celebration having varied probably with time and place, makes it often impossible to assign them an appropriate niche in our calendar for discussion. Such is the case with the Feast of Fools, a custom of Eastern origin,† and one on no account to be confounded with

* See a grave, prosy account of this custom in the Gentleman's Magazine—*Supplement* to the year 1791, vol. lxi. p. 1169.

† "Videtur sane ex Episcoporum, vel potius clericorum, lascivia a Græcis originem cæpisse." Du Cange, sub voce *Kalendæ*. And he goes on to give an extract from the eighth Synod, which certainly seems to prove the correctness of his assertion. He might however have found the fact yet more distinctly stated by Cedrenus, who attributes to Theophylact, Patriarch of Constantinople in the tenth century, the invention if not exactly of the *Feast of Fools*, at least of

ALL FOOLS' DAY, to which so far as mere sound goes it bears so great a similarity. It was a favourite festival in France at one time, but more particularly in the capital, at Rheims, and at Dijon; and was nothing more than another form of those *mummeries* and masqueradings, which either grew directly out of the Pagan festivities, or were substituted for them by the Christian Church as the best way of reconciling its followers to the austerities of the new faith.

It is not a little remarkable that the lower orders of the priesthood should have clung to this festival with even more fondness than the laity, in defiance of the efforts of the superior clergy to put it down; and indeed it would seem in some measure, to have been peculiar to them, for amongst other names it was also called the FEAST OF SUBDEACONS.* Nor was the time of

the similar absurdities from which it sprang. There can be the less doubt of this truth, as the poor patriarch was punished for his ingenuity by being dashed against a wall by his horse which produced hæmorrhage, and in the course of two years occasioned his death. It is amusing to see how craftily Cedrenus insinuates by a side-wind what he was too prudent to state in so many words. After having detailed all the enormities of Theophylact he concludes by saying; "*Οὕτως δὲ βιοτεύων, κατασ-τρέφει τὸν βίον ἐν τῷ ἀτάκτως ἱππάζεσθαι, ἔν τίνι τείχει τῶν παραθαλασσίων θρασυθείς, καὶ αἷμα ἀναγαγὼν διὰ τοῦ στόματος. Ἐπὶ δύο δ' ἔτη νοσηλθυόμενος καὶ ὑδέρῳ περιπεσὼν ἐτελευτησε.*" —"Living in this fashion he ended his life by furious riding, being dashed against a certain sea-wall, which caused him to spit blood. After two years sickness anasarca supervened, and he died." HISTORIARUM COMPEND: a *Georgio Cedreno*, Tom. ii. p. 639.

* This fact is recorded by Du Cange; though it is scarcely possible to agree with him in his notion that it was so called from the deacons being *saturi, or saoul*, i.e. *gorged*. His words are "Ejusmodi festivitati FESTI HYPODIACONORUM nomen inditum, non quòd revera soli subdiaconi has scelestas choreas ducerent, sed quòd hac joculari appellatione nostri indicare voluerint festivitatem hanc fuisse ebriorem clericorum seu diaconorum; enim evincit id vox *Soudiacres*, id est, ad literam, *saturi diaconi*, quasi *diacres saouls*." See DUCANGE, sub voce KALEND.E.

its celebration more certain, it being sometimes observed on the *Circumcision*; sometimes on the *Epiphany*, or in its Octaves;* sometimes on *St. Stephen's Day*;† and sometimes on the *17th of December*,‡ from which it was also called the DECEMBER LIBERTY.

There is the same diversity, if we should not rather call it confusion, in the ceremony itself, the various accounts being somewhat inconsistent with each other; but the following will perhaps be found upon the whole to present a tolerably correct idea of the festival. It is only necessary to premise that the ABBOT OF FOOLS, here spoken of, is by no means to be confounded with the BISHOP OF FOOLS who was elected upon *Innocents' Day*.§

The abbot being elected at the time above mentioned, Te Deum is sung, and he is borne home on the shoulders of his companions, the place being especially adorned for the purpose, and where due potations are in readiness. At his entrance all arise, and the wine being drunk, the abbot, or in his absence the præcentor, begins a chaunt, the two opposing chorusses gradually encreasing in loudness and trying to outscream the other, with running accompaniments of howling, hissing, laughing, mocking, and clapping of hands, at the conclusion of which the janitor makes proclamation ex officio:

"De par Mossenhor Labat è sos Cosseliers vos fam assaber que tot homs lo sequa lay on voura anar'ea quo

* "*Festum Hypodiaconorum*, quod vocamus *Stultorum*, a quibusdam perficitur in Circumcisione, a quibusdam verò in Epiphania, vel in ejus Octavis." BELETUS; De Divin. Offici. Cap. 72.

† "Idem Cæremoniale, sub Festo S. Stepheni." DUCANGE—KALEND.E.

‡ "Die 17 Decembris conveniunt omnes sclafardi et clericuli ut abbatem eligunt." Id.

§ "Ex eodem CERIMONIALI (MS. *Eccles. Vivar.* an. 1365) *Episcopus stultus*, qui ab *Abbate* distinctus erat, eligebatur in festo S. S. Innocentium eodem ritu quo abbas Stultorum." DUCANGE—*Kalendæ*.

sus la pena de talhar lo braye.—" that is " Monsignor the Abbot and his Councillors give you to know that all men must follow him wheresoever he goes, on pain of having their breeches cut off."*

Hereupon the abbot and the rest rush out of the house, and parade the city, the former being saluted by all who meet him in his progress. This lasts till the eve of the Nativity, and during the whole time the abbot wears a costume suitable to the part he is playing.

From other authors we learn that the excesses went far beyond what is here related by Ducange. According to such accounts, some of the characters were masked, or had their faces bedaubed with paint, either grotesquely or so hideously as to excite terror. In this state they danced into the choir, singing obscene songs, and the deacons and subdeacons took a pleasure in eating puddings and sausages upon the altar, under the nose of the officiating priest; they played too at cards and dice before his face, and placed fragments of old shoes in the holy water that he might be annoyed. Mass being over, they ran and jumpt, and danced about the church, stripping themselves naked, and performing every sort of indecency; and afterwards by way of varying their amusements paraded the city in carts, filled with filth, which they flung at the crowds about them. From time to time these savoury vehicles would stop, to give them an opportunity of exhibiting themselves in lascivious pantomime, accompanied by songs that were not a jot more decent. What they were can not be better indicated than by the fact that none but the most licentious of the laity could be found to join in them as actors, however much they might enjoy the show as lookers on; and it gives us

* DUCANGE.—*Kalendæ*, p. 1664. I suspect that *talhar lo braye*—literally, to cut off the breeches—is an idiomatic phrase, though I can offer nothing certain in regard to it.

a curious insight into the policy of the priesthood that they could thus allow the worst of the rabble to play the part of fools in the costume of monks and nuns.*

The *Bishop of Fools*, when elected, would seem to have had somewhat more of gravity, if not of discretion, in his office. Being elected, he was carried by the clerks, a bell preceding him to the episcopal mansion, where he was placed in a window with his face towards the city and bestowed his blessing upon the people. Afterwards he celebrated matins, high mass, and vespers, in the cathedral, presiding for three days over the whole in true pontifical fashion, even the usual costume being rigidly observed both by himself and his subordinates. The burlesque in this case was all the richer from its superior pretensions to gravity, though it is quite clear that they both equally belonged to the *Feast of Fools*, which from this would appear to have changed its form considerably according to the time and place in which it was enacted.

* "Les uns étoient masquez, ou avec des visages barbouillés, qui faisoient peur, ou qui faisoient rire; les autres en habits de femmes ou de pantomimes, tels que sont les ministres du theatre. Ils dansoient dans le chœur en entrant, et chantoient des chansons obscenès. Les diàcres et les soudiacres prenoient plaisir à manger des boudins et des saucices sur l'autel, au nez du prêtre célébrant; ils jouoient à ses yeux aux cartes et au dez; ils mettoient dans l'encensoir quelques morceaux de vieilles savates pour lui faire respirer une mauvaise odeur. Apres la messe, chacun couroit, sautoit, et dansoit, par l'eglise avec tant d'impudence, que quelques uns n'avoient pas honte de se porter à toutes sortes d'indécences, et de se depouiller entierement; ensuite ils se faisoient trainer par les rues dans des tomberaux pleins d'ordures, où ils prenoient plaisir d'en jetter à la populace qui s'assembloit autour d'eux. Ils s'arrêtoient et faisoient de leurs corps des mouvemens et des postures lascives, qu'ils accompagnoient de paroles impudiques. *Les plus libertins d'entre les séculiers se méloient parmi le clergé* pour faire aussi quelques personnages de foux ens habits ecclesiastiques de moines et de religieuses." MEMOIRS POUR SERVIR A L'HISTOIRE DE LA FETE DES FOUX, par M. Du Tilliot; p. 5, 4to. Geneve, 1741.

Eve of the Epiphany—January 5th. It would have been strange if the vigil of so ceremonious a day as the Epiphany had been without its peculiar observances and superstitions, and they were probably numerous at one time, although so few fragments have been preserved to us. The two principal customs that we still find in connection with this festival belong, the first to Herefordshire, the second to Devonshire; and it is likely enough that a closer familiarity with the habits of the rural districts might discover many others. These have been dug out of that antiquarian mine, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in which though it can not be denied there is much dross, there is also quite enough of stirling ore to repay the trouble of working it.

"On the eve of Twelfth Day, at the approach of evening, the farmers, their friends, servants, &c. all assemble, and near six o'clock all walk together to a field where wheat is growing. The highest part of the ground is always chosen, where twelve small fires and one large one are lighted up. The attendants, headed by the master of the family, pledge the company in old cyder, which circulates freely on these occasions. A circle is formed round the large fire, when a general shout and hallooing takes place, which you hear answered from all the villages and fields near; as I have myself counted fifty or sixty fires burning at the same time, which are generally placed on some eminence. This being finished, the company all return to the house, where the good housewife and her maids are preparing a good supper, which on this occasion is very plentiful. A large cake is always provided with a hole in the middle. After supper the company all attend the bailiff (or head of the oxen) to the wain-house, where the following particulars are observed; the master at the head of his friends fills the cup (generally strong ale) and stands opposite the first or finest of the oxen;

(fourteen of which I have often seen tied up in their stalls together;) he then pledges him in a curious toast; the company then follow his example with all the other oxen, addressing each by their name. This being over, the large cake is produced with much ceremony, and put on the horn of the first ox, through the hole in the cake; he is then tickled to make him toss his head; if he throws the cake behind, it is the mistress' perquisite; if before, (in what is termed the *boosy**) the bailiff claims this prize. This ended, the company all return to the house, the doors of which are in the meantime locked, and not opened till some joyous songs are sung. On entering, a scene of mirth and jollity commences, and reigns through the house till a late, or rather an early hour the next morning. Cards are introduced and the merry tale goes round."†

This in Herefordshire is called wassailing; and the fires, as I shall have occasion to show hereafter, are nothing else than the antient emblematic worship of the sun, the custom remaining long after the object of it has been very generally forgotten. In the same way the pledging of the animals in ale or cyder with strange toasts, and the emptying the cups to each other, are plainly enough borrowed from the libations of the ancients to their rural deities; and we find the same custom at one time prevailed among the Danes.‡

* Boosy,—derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Bosg*, *Bosig*, or *Bosih*,—properly speaking signifies a *stall* for cows or oxen; but in the northern counties, to which the use of the word is now confined, it is more generally applied to the upper part of the stall where the fodder lies. Such is its limited meaning in the text above, where it is spelt in a somewhat uncommon fashion; I have generally found it written and pronounced, *boose*.

† GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, for February, 1791, vol. lxi. p. 116.

‡ "Mox Niordi et Frejæ memoria poculis recolebatur, annua ut ipsis contingeret felicitas, frugumque et reliquæ annonæ uberrimus proventus." *Olai Wormii* MONUMENTA DANICA, lib. i. p. 28.

The apple trees also come in for their share of honour, as might naturally be expected in a county where cyder was in so much request. In some parts of Devonshire it is the custom for the people "to go after supper into the orchard, with a large milk-pail full of cyder having roasted apples pressed into it. Out of this each person in company takes what is called a *clayen cup*—i.e. an earthenware cup, full of liquor, and standing under each of the more fruitful apple trees, passing by those that are not good bearers, he addresses it in the following words:

Health to thee,
Good apple tree!
Well to bear, pocket-fulls, hat-fulls,
Peck-fulls, bushel-bag-fulls.

And then drinking up part of the contents, he throws the rest with the fragments of the roasted apple at the tree.—At each cup the company set up a shout."*

In Devonshire a similar custom prevailed, of which the following account is given by another correspondent of the bland Sylvanus Urban.—"On the eve of the Epiphany, the farmer, attended by his workmen, with a large pitcher of cyder, goes to the orchard, and there encircling one of the best among the trees they drink the following toast three several times:

Here's to thee,
Old apple tree!
Whence thou mayst bud, and whence thou mayst blow!
And whence thou mayst bear apples enow!
Hats full, caps full!
Bushel—bushel—sacks full!
And my pockets full too.
Huzza!"†

After this they return to the house, where they find the

* Brand's Popular Antiquities, vol. 1, p. 19.
† Idem: for May, p. 403.

doors barred, as I have just described in Herefordshire; only here their admittance is made contingent upon their guessing what is on the spit, "which is generally some nice little thing difficult to be hit on, and is the reward of him who first names it."* Mrs. Bray, however, when speaking of the same custom, "wears her rue with a difference," as poor Ophelia phrases it. According to her, they throw "some of the cyder about the roots of the trees, placing bits of the toast on the branches; and then forming themselves into a ring, they like the bards of old set up their voices and sing a song."†

TWELFTH-DAY; EPIPHANY; January 6th.—This is called *Twelfth Day* because, being the twelfth from the Nativity, it is that on which the Magi came out of Persia and passed through Arabia into Bethlehem‡—rather a round-about way it must be owned—to offer homage to the infant in the manger. Collier, however, has given us one of Alfred's laws, which seems to point at another reason for this appellation. He says, "I shall mention one law with relation to holydays, by virtue of which the *twelve days after the Nativity of our Saviour are made holydays.*"§ There is certainly nothing improbable in the idea that it might thus be named as being the twelfth and finishing day of the festivals.

In popular language these *Magi* are called the *Three Kings of Cologne*, the first of them being named Melchior,

* Idem: Idem.

† DESCRIPTION OF THE PART OF DEVONSHIRE BORDERING ON THE TAMAR AND THE TAVRY. *By Mrs. Bray*, 8vo. London, 1836.

‡ "Venerunt itaque originaliter ex Persia; sed in hoc itinere transierunt per Arabiam; nam a Persia ad Judæam via directa est per medium Mesopotamiæ; et dein transmittendo Euphratem juxta Bîr per Arabiæ partem transeundum erat ad Judæam." *Hyde;* HISTORIA RELIGIONIS VETERUM PERSARUM, p. 376. 4to. Oxonii. 1700.

§ COLLIER'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF BRITAIN; vol. i.—Book iii. Cent. ix. p. 163,

an aged man with a long beard, who offered gold to our Saviour, as to a king in testimony of his regality; the second, Jasper, a beardless youth, who offered frankincense, as unto a God, in acknowledgement of his divinity; the third, Balthazar, a black, or Moor, with a large spreading beard, who offered myrrh as to a man, that was ready or fit for his sepulchre, thereby signifying his humanity."* Their skulls, or what is said to be their skulls, are preserved as reliques at Cologne.

Setting aside this idle legend, with the names that are evidently of monkish origin, let us inquire who the Magi really were, and to what country they belonged.

Without entering into a disquisition, that must of necessity be tedious, on the etymology of the word, it will be sufficient to observe that by the concurrent testimony of all ancient writers the Magi were Persians,† and that in the language of their country neither *magia* nor *magus* had the slightest reference to the black art as we now understand it. In that tongue the word *Magus* meant

* Festa Anglo-Romana, p. 7,—12mo. London, 1677.

† See *Hyde;* (Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum, cap. 31, p. 376), who gives a multitude of authorities for the fact. But at the same time it must not be concealed, that Origen (Origines contra Celsum), and some others, maintained that the Magi were actual necromancers and cultivated an acquaintance with the devil. Hildebrand (De Diebus Festis; p. 39), is very diffuse upon this subject. He says, "Magi apud Persas fuere, 1. *Theologi*, et ut plurimum sacerdotes Persici et sacrorum antistites. 2. *Consiliarii*, et tanto loco in aulis regum, ut nemini in Persia regem esse licuerit, quem non magi informassent, teste Cicer. de Divinat. Fuerunt, iii; *Medici et Physici;* et denique *Philosophi*, præsertim *Mathematici*, *Astronomi*, et *Genethliaci* (casters of nativities). Hinc versiculi:

Ille penes Persas magus est, qui sidera novit,
Quique scit herbarum vires cultumque Deorum.

Iidem quoque Magi fuerunt in Persia cum *Brachmannibus* in India, cum *Druidibus* Gallorum, et cum *Philosophis* Græcorum.

a philosopher and a priest, or at all events a philosopher who was particularly addicted to the study of religion; and who besides might be,—if he was not for the most part—a royal counsellor, a physician, an astrologer, and a mathematician. In fact they were the same in Persia, that the Brahmins were in India, the Druids amongst the Gauls, and the Philosophers amongst the Greeks.* We shall therefore the less wonder if we find strong reason for believing that Zoroaster was of their number, and that Pythagoras learnt his philosophy from them.

It was reckoned a high honour even for kings and princes to belong to this wise and influential body; so much so indeed that even Darius, the son of Hystaspes, took care to have it engraved upon his monument that he was a "magicorum doctor,"—an *archimage* or *arch magician.* Of these *magicians, magi,* or *sophys,* there were three classes; the first, which was the most learned, neither ate nor killed animals; the second ate of them, but never killed any of the tame kind; the third devoured every thing they could lay their hands upon.†

* "Persarum lingua *Magus* est, qui nostra *sacerdos.*" APULEII APOLOGIA, p. 446, 4to. Parisiis, 1688. Here we have the priestly office distinctly assumed, while in Philo Judæus we find sufficient testimony to the philosophical pursuits of the Magi—Ἐν Πέρσαις μὲν τὸ Μάγων, οἱ τὰ φύσεως ἔργα διερευνώμενοι πρὸς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας, καθ' ἡσυχίαν τὰς θείας ἀρετὰς τρανωτέραις ἐμφάσεσιν ἱεροφαντοῦνται τε καὶ ἱεροφαντοῦσιν. PHILO JUDÆI OPERA.—Liber *Quisquis Virtuti Studet,* p. 456, Tom. ii. folio, Londini, 1742.

† "Παρά γε μὲν τοῖς Πέρσαις, οἱ περὶ τὸ θειῶν σοφοὶ, καὶ τάττα θεράποντες, Μάγοι μὲν προσαγορεύονται, τοῦτο γὰρ δηλοῖ κατὰ τὴν ἐπιχώριον διάλεκτον ὁ Μάγος. ὕυτω δὲ μέγα καὶ σεβάσμιον γένος τοῦτο παρὰ Πέρσαις νενόμισται, ὥστε καὶ Δαρεῖον τὸν Ὑστάσπου ἐπιγράψαι τῷ μνήματι πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις, ὅτι καὶ μαγικῶν γένοιτο διδάσκαλος. Διήρηντο δε οὗτοι εις γένη τρία, ὥς φησι Σύμβουλος (Εὐβουλος) ὅπερ τὴν τοῦ Μίθρα ἱστορίαν ἐν πολλοῖς βιβλίοις

It is difficult to understand, upon mere human grounds, why the Persian Magi, who had a distinct faith of their own should have travelled so far as Bethlehem to worship the future founder of a yet unexistent religion. Two circumstances however may help to throw a light upon this difficulty, and both of them so singular in themselves as to be well worthy of consideration.

There is a prophecy of Zoroaster, and which had even reached the ancient Irish, wherein we find him predicting in terms, not to be mistaken, the future birth of a Saviour and its announcement by a star. "He" says Abul-Pharajius, speaking of Zoroaster, or Zeradusht,† "taught the Persians the manifestation of the Lord Christ, commanding that they should bring him gifts; and revealed to them that it would happen in the latter time that a virgin would conceive without contact with a man, and that when her child was born a star would appear and shine by

ἀναγράψας· ὧν οἱ πρῶτοι καὶ λογιώτατοι, ὄυτ' ἐσθίουσιν ἔμψυχον. οὔτε φονευουσιν, ἐμμένουσι δὲ τῇ παλαιᾷ τῶν ζώων ἀποχῇ· οἱ δὲ δεύτεροι χρῶνται μὲν, οὐ μέντοι τῶν ἡμερων ζώων τι κτείνουσιν. οὐδ' οἱ τρίτοι ὁμοίως τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐφάπτονται πάντων."—"Amongst the Persians, those who are wise in divine matters, and serve the Deity, are called Magi; for such is the meaning of Magus in the language of the country. So highly is this class esteemed by the Persians that even Darius, the son of Hystaspes took care among other things to have it inscribed upon his monument that he had been a doctor of Magic. These Magi were divided into three kinds, as Symbulus (Eubulus) says, who wrote the history of Mithra in many books; of whom the first and most learned neither ate of animals, nor killed them, but persisted in the old abstinence from such food; the second class ate of them, but did not kill tame animals; the third class, like the rest of the people, laid their hands upon every thing." *Porphyrius* DE ABSTINENT: AB ESU ANIMALIUM, p. 348, 4to. Trajecti ad Rhenum.

† It has been a matter of much dispute whether these two names were identical, and if so, whether there was not more than one Zoroaster or Zeradusht. The discussion however, though highly interesting, would lead us much too far for the object now in view.

day, in the midst of which would be seen the figure of a virgin. But you, my children, will see its rising before all the nations. When, therefore ye shall behold it, go whither the star shall guide ye, and adore the child, and offer up to him your gifts, seeing that he is the WORD, which has created the Heavens."*

The second circumstance alluded to, and scarcely of less importance in the solution of this apparent difficulty, now remains to be explained. The Magi had long been accustomed to pay their annual visits to Bethlehem for the purpose of worshipping in the temple of Adonis on the 24th of December, at which time similar religious rites were celebrated throughout all the Mithratic caves of Persia in honour of the birth of their God Iao, who was supposed to have been born in a cave on the 25th of December, to have been put to death, and to have risen on the 25th of March.† Perhaps too we miss the spirit of the sacred text by taking it in too literal a sense. When it is said that the star went before the Magi, it is not to be understood that the light actually preceded them as the pillar of fire went before the Israelites. Any star would naturally seem to be moving before those who followed in its direction; and the Magi, who were astrologers even more than they were

* "Hic Persas docuit de manifestatione Domini Christi, jubens eos illi dona afferre; indicavitque futurum ut ultimis temporibus conciperet virgo fœtum absque contactu viri, cùmque nasceretur appariturum stellam, quæ interdiu luceret, et in cujus medio conspiceretur figura puellæ virginis. "Vos autem, o filii mei, ante omnes gentes ortum ejus percepturi estis; cum ergo videritis stellam, abeuntes quò vos [illa] dirigat, istum adorate, offerentes ipsi munera vestra; est siquidem ille verbum quod cælum condidit." GREGORII ABUL-PHARAJII HISTORIA DYNASTIARUM, p. 54, 4to. Oxon. 1663. The above is quoted from Pocock's Latin version of the Arabic.

† Higgin's Anacalypsis, v. ii. p. 99. Admitting the facts to be as stated by this author, it by no means follows that we are to agree with him in his inferences.

astronomers, had read in *his star** the birth of Christ as foretold in the prophecy of Zoroaster.

Other events too connected with the same fact have in like manner been prefigured by the circumstances of Mithratic history. Thus we have Chrishna conveyed over the Yamuna by Vasudeva in a miraculous escape from his uncle Cansa, the Herod of Hindoo Scripture history,† and many more might be enumerated would my limits admit of them. Of course the interpretation of these facts has varied, and ever must vary, according to the habits of the interpreters; and if by some they have been used as weapons of attack upon Christianity, by others they have been employed both as historical and inferential proofs of its truth,—so uncertain is human reason when applied to things celestial.

I have hitherto spoken of the Magi as being only three in number, and such is the generally received belief; but some authors have said that there were thirteen of them.‡

* Saint Matthew expressly says *his*.

† See MOOR'S HINDOO PANTHEON; plate 58. A long account also is given of this Hindoo Herod in Maurice's INDIAN SCEPTIC, (p. 102.) He had been warned by a mysterious voice on the marriage of his sister, Devaci, that her eighth son would be his destroyer, whereupon he seized her by the hair, and would have cut off her head, had not her husband, Vasudeva, promised to give up to him all the children she might bring forth. Six he slew; the seventh, Rama, escaped; and when for the eighth time Devaci became pregnant her beauty shone forth so resplendently, that it brightened her husband's face and illuminated the walls of her chamber. At length she brought forth a child, and the eyes of the parents being open for the moment they knew it was God himself. Again their eyes were reduced to a mortal state, when they saw only a human infant before them, but a divine voice directed Vasudeva to fly and secrete the infant. Cansa being thus baffled, ordered "*all the young children throughout his kingdom to be slain.*" In this story we find not only the exact counterpart of Herod, but the prototype also of Saturn devouring his children lest any one of them should destroy him.

‡ BAR BABLUL, as quoted by *Hyde* in his HIST. REL. VET. PERS. p. 377.

Their names too have been variously given, but the details are hardly worth repeating:* and even the opinion that they were Persians, though it seems the most credible, has met with some dissentients. One writer will have it that they were Jews, or Jewish legates rather, residing at the time in Persia or Syria;† while the Armenian Haitho,‡ who lived in the fifth century, has left it on record, that they were the rulers of three provinces in Tartary, who chose to call themselves kings, and whose kinsmen are Christians at the present day amongst a people of heathens.§

* Idem. Idem.

† "Cum enim inde ab ultima creditum semper sit ætate hos Magos philosophos fuisse, ex Persia, sive, quod aliis placuit, Arabia oriundos ac a vero Dei cultu alienos, non dubitavit celeberrimus vir aliam complecti sententiam, ac Magos istos pro Judæis, aut Judæorum potius in Persia aut Syria commorantium legatis." De Magis Bethleihemum, Stella Duce, Profectis. *A Jac. Alb. Hanselmanno*, p. 2, 4to. Vitembergiæ. 1716.

‡ It seems strange that so sound a scholar as Hyde should have run into the mistake of calling Haitho, an Armenian *king*—Armeniæ rex—(p. 376). In the preface to the very work from which Hyde quotes, Salconi expressly says that he was a monk and a relation of the king of Armenia. "Hæ sunt historiæ partium Orientis a religioso viro, *fratre* Haythono, Domino Curchi, *consanguineo Regis Armeniæ*, compilatæ." From this same authority we learn that the work was originally taken down in French by Salconi, from the dictation of Brother Haytho, and subsequently translated by the former into Latin. In a yet earlier edition of the work—1529,—he is styled a *brother of the Premonstratensian order*, and the title of the work runs somewhat differently, being Liber Historiarum Partium Orientis, sive Passagium Terræ Sanctæ; instead of *Historia Orientalis, quæ eadem et de Tartaris inscribitur.*

§ "In regno Tarsæ sunt tres provinciæ, quarum dominatores se reges faciunt appellari. Homines illius patriæ nominantur *Jogour*; semper idola coluerunt et adhuc colunt omnes præter decem cognationes illorum regum, qui per demonstrationem stellæ venerunt adorare nativitatem in Bethlehem Judæ. Et adhuc multi magni et nobiles inveniuntur inter Tartaros de cognatione illa qui tenent firmiter fidem Christi."

This day was also called the EPIPHANY,* that is to say the *manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles;* and by some writers, though more rarely, the THEOPHANY,† or *manifestation of the Deity*. Lastly, it was termed BETHANIA, from a word compounded of Hebrew and Greek, namely *Beth*, a "house," and φαίνειν to *show* or to *appear*, "because he appeared in the house by the transformation of wine and water"—a singular derivation, but which is here given on the authority of Belethus.‡

It may easily be imagined that so important a day in the Christian calendar would not be without its full share of ceremonies, either grave or farcical. These have gone through the usual routine; from pagan rites they have become christian solemnities, and from these again they have degenerated into popular customs, which have

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HAITHONI ARMENI HISTORIA ORIENTALIS.—Cap. ii. p. 3. I should almost have doubted under all the circumstances whether by Tarsa Haitho really meant Tartary, had it not been for his subsequent description of its situation.

* From the Greek ἐπιφάνεια a *rising as of the sun*, the *appearance of a God*. But in the FESTA ANGLO-ROMANA, another reason is assigned, and another appellation given: "Or 'tis so called from the appearance of the Holy Ghost in the shape of a dove at his baptism thirty years after, for this sixth of January was the day of our Saviour's baptism, and is celebrated as such by the Church, and therefore 'tis termed by Alcas Cyriacus, an Arabick manuscript of astronomical tables in the archbishop's archives in the library of Oxford, the *Feast of Epiphanie* or BENEDICTION OF WATERS. On this day also is commemorated the first miracle performed by our Saviour at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, where he turned water into wine." FESTA ANGLO-ROMANA, p. 9, 12mo. London, 1678.

† From the Greek θεὸς a *God*, and φαίνειν to *show* or to *appear*.

‡ "Tertia denique nominata est *Bethania* nomine conflato ab Hæbreo et Græco; videlicet a BETH, quod domus est, quæ item alio anno eodem die contingit; apparuit ñ in domo per transformationem aquæ in vinum." *Explicatio Divin. Officior.* a Beletho, cap. 73, p. 344.

grown fainter and fainter from year to year, and in all probability will be one day extinguished. Of those that still remain, the drawing for king and queen is the most important. In the olden time it was thus managed in our own country, and the same custom prevailed throughout the continent, with more or less variation in the details.—"After tea a cake is produced, and two bowls containing the fortunate chances for the different sexes. The host fills up the tickets, and the whole company, except the king and queen, are to be ministers of state, maids of honour, or ladies of the bed-chamber. Often the host and hostess, more by design perhaps than accident become the king and queen. According to Twelfth-Day law, each party is to support his character till midnight."* There was however at one time another mode of electing their Twelfth Night Majesties, of which this seems to be only a corruption. The cake was made full of plums, a bean and a pea being mixed up amongst them; whoever upon the division of it got the bean, he was acknowledged for king; whoever got the pea, she was to be queen. Nothing can be more graphic than Herrick's poetical account of this ceremony.

"TWELFE NIGHT, OR KING AND QUEENE.

Now, now the mirth comes
With the cake full of plums,
Where Beane's the king of the sport here;
Besides we must know
The Pea also
Must revell as Queene in the court here.

Begin then to chuse,
(This night as ye use,)
Who shall for the present delight here
Be a king by the lot
And who shall not
Be Twelve-day Queene for the night here.

* *Brand*, vol. i. p. 12.

Which knowne let us make
Joy-sops with the cake;
And let not a man then be seen here,
Who unurg'd will not drinke
To the base from the brink
A health to the king and the queene here.

Next crowne the bowle full
With gentle lamb's-wooll;
Adde sugar, nutmeg, and ginger,
With store of ale too;
And thus ye must doe
To make the wassaile a swinger.

Give then to the king
And Queene wassailing;
And though with ale ye be whet here;
Yet part ye from hence
As free from offence
As when ye innocent met here." *

This has generally been supposed to be in honour of the Three Kings of Cologne; but in all probability owes its origin to the Greek and Roman custom of casting lots at their banquets,† for who should be the *rex convivii*, or, as Horace calls him, the *arbiter bibendi*. The lucky cast was termed *Venus* or *Basilicus*, and whoever threw it, gave

* HERRICK'S HESPERIDES, p. 376, 8vo. London, 1648. See also *Speeches to the Queen at Sudley*, p. 8—NICHOL'S PROGRESSES OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, sig. b. 3.

† This however was not alwnys the case; sometimes the *symposiarch*, or KING, as he was also termed of the compotation, was elected solely by imposition of a coronet of flowers upon his head. Both customs are fully explained by Rosinus, or as I should rather call him Roszfeld, for he was a native of Eisenach, in Germany, and has therefore better claims to the last appellation—"Jam et hoc notandum in cōviviis moris fuisse, ut talis astragalisve sorte missis *Symposiarcha*, quem alii REGEM, alii magistrum convivii, Varro Modimperatorem appellat, duceretur. Nonnunquam etiam sola corollæ impositione diceretur." *Rosini Antiquitates Romanæ*, lib. v. cap. XXX. Those who wish for more minute information upon this topic should consult the SYMPOSIACON of *Plutarch*, lib. i. Quæstio quarta.

laws for the night to his competitors. The unlucky throw was called *canicula* and *chius*.*

In some parts of France the *Bean-King*—le Roi de la Feve—is elected by another process. A child is placed under a table where he can see nothing, and the master of the feast holding up a piece of cake demands, whose portion it is to be. The child replies according to his own fancy, and this game continues 'till the piece, which contains the bean, has been allotted.† A whole court is thus formed, the fool not being forgotten; and every time either of their majesties is seen to drink, the company are bound to cry out, under pain of a forfeit, "the king (or the queen) drinks."‡

There is little more to be said of this day except that

* "Talorum vero *canis* damnosus; *senio* medius et anceps, siquidem modo lucra, nonnunquam damnum afferebat: is vero quaternarium numerum facit, *chius* verò ternarium. *Venus* autem, quæ summum continet numerum, multum lucri affert; semperque felici exitu ludum terminavit." ALEXANDER AB ALEXANDRO—*Geniales Dies*, lib. iii. cap. xxi. p. 791.

† "Celui, qui est le maistre du banquet, a un grand gasteau, dans lequel y a une febue cachée,—gasteau, dy je, que l'on coupe en autant de parts qu'il y a de gens conviez au festin. Cela fait en met un petit enfant sous la table, lequel le maistre interroge sous ce nom de Phebé, comme si ce fut un qui en l' innocence de son ange representast une forme d'oracle d'Apollon. A cét interrogatoire l'enfant respond d'un mot Latin, *Domine*; sur cela le maistre l'adjure de dire à qui il distribuera la portion du gasteau qu'il tient en sa main; l'enfant le nomme ainsi qu'il luy tombe en la pensée, sans acception de la dignité des personnes, jusques à ce que la part est donnée à celuy ou est la febue, et par ce moyen il est reputè Roy de la compagnie, ancores qu'il fust le moindre. Qu'il n'y ait en ceci beaucoup de l'ancien paganisme, je n'en fnis doute. Ce que nous representons ce jous là est le feste des Saturnales que l'on celebroit dedans Rome sur la fin du mois de Decembre et commencement de Janvier." LES RECHERCHES DE LA FRANCE D'ESTIENNE PASQUIER, livre iv. chap. ix. p. 375.

‡ DICTIONAIRE COMIQUE, par P. J. LEROUX, tom. ii. p. 431, *Roi de la Feve.*

it is with many the end of Christmas, though amongst the lower classes the festival is generally considered not to terminate till Candlemas. Still it would seem that these twelve days,—the real Christmas according to ecclesiastical computation,—had something in them peculiarly sacred in the estimation of the vulgar, for they were supposed, if rightly observed, to prefigure the weather for the rest of the year.*

St. Distaff's Day; Rock Day—January 7th. St. Distaff is nothing more than a jocular saint of the people's creation, the *rock* being a distaff that is held in the hand, from which the wool is spun by twirling a ball below. It would appear from Herrick's little poem on the subject that the men now amused themselves with burning the flax and tow of the women, who in requital dashed pails of water over them.

Saint Distaff's Day — *or the Morrow after Twelfth Day.*

Partly worke and partly play,
Ye must on St. Distaff's Day;
From the plough some free your teame,
Then come home and fother them.
If the maids a spinning goe,
Burne the flax and fire the tow;
* * * * *
Bring in pailes of water then,
Let the maids bewash the men.
Give St. Distaff all the right
Then bid Christmas sport good night;
And next morrow every one
To his own vocation." †

* "Others observe the twelve days of Christmas, to foreshew the weather in all the twelve succeding moneths respectively." Nature's Secrets, by *Thomas Willsford*, p. 145. London, 1658.

† Herrick's Hesperides, p. 374. I have omitted two lines of the song, as being somewhat too coarse for modern refinement.

PLOUGH MONDAY; *the first Monday* after Twelfth Night —This day is more peculiarly the ploughman's holyday, for though Tusser says:

> "Plough Monday next, after that Twelfthtide is past,
> Bids out with the plough, the worst husband is last,"*

yet it is plain from the custom of the *Stot Plough*,† *White Plough*,‡ or *Fond Plough*, i.e. *Fool Plough*, that the days of merry-making are not yet over. It belongs to the olden times of papal supremacy, and is incidentally noticed by John Bale in his never-ending catalogue of the sins pertaining to Catholicism. Never did crusader belabour paynim with more right good will than does our stout Bishop of Ossory belabour the papists, his language being always garnished with the choicest flowers of Billingsgate, and indeed it may be said with an energy beyond Billingsgate.§

* FIVE HUNDRED POINTS OF HUSBANDRY.

† A STOT signifies a young *bullock* or *steer*. See Grose's Provincial Glossary.

‡ It was called the *White Plough* "because the gallant young men that compose it appear to be dressed in their shirts, (without coat or waistcoat) upon which great numbers of ribbons, folded into roses, are loosely stitched on. It appears to be a very airy habit at this cold season, but they have on warm waistcoats under it." See Brand, vol. i. p. 280. We have an instance of this name in the EXTRACTS FROM THE CHURCHWARDEN'S *Accompts of Heybridge*. "Item, receyved of the gadryng of the *white plowe*.....£0 1s. 3*d*. NICHOL'S ILLUSTRATIONS OF ANTIENT MANNERS, &c., p. 169. At page 240 we have a similar item, upon which the editor observes,—"*Plow-gathering*; but why this was applied to the use of the church I can not say. There is a custom in this neighbourhood" (Wigtoft, Lincolnshire) "of the ploughmen parading on Plow-Monday; but what little they collect is applied wholly to feasting themselves."

§ The proofs of this assertion are somewhat too coarse for quotation, but they are to be found in all his pamphlets, and they are pretty numerous, being for the most part published under the assumed name of John Harryson, but sometimes under that of Henrye Stalbrydge.

In speaking of the ceremonies appertaining to this day, it must be recollected that they varied much according to the time and place in which they were enacted. Sometimes the sword dance formed a part of them, and the whole formed a sort of character-pageants, the dancers in strange attire dragging a plough, preceded by music, and accompanied by the *Bessy* " in the grotesque habit of an old woman, and the *fool* almost covered with skins, a hairy cap on, and the tail of some animal hanging from his back. The office of one of these characters is to go about rattling a box amongst the spectators of the dance, in which he receives their little donations."*

The passage alluded to in the text, as showing the popish origin of Plough Monday, is in a pamphlet with the odd title of *Yet a course at the Romyshe foxe*, A Dysclosynge *or opening of the Manne of synne &c.* It is as follows.—" Than ought my Lorde," (Bonner, bishop of London) " also to suffre the same selfe ponnyshment for not goynge abought with saynt Nycolas' clarkes, for not hallowynge pelgrimes to Hierusalem and Rome, for not *sensinge the plowghes upō plowgh mondaye*, for not rostynge egges in the palme ashes fyre, and for not syngynge Gaudeamus in the worshypp of hoyle Thomas Becket, with such other lyke, which were sumtyme more laudable ceremonyes, than eyther saturdaye processyon or yet holye-water-making upon the sondaye, p. 28, 12mo. *Zurich*, 1543, *the x daye of Decēbre.* These *processionings* seem particularly to have excited the wrath of Bale. In another part of the same work (p. 21.) he says, " he hath not gone *processyon upon Saturdayes* at even-song, a very haynous offence, and worthy to be judged no lesse than hygh treason agaynst your holye father, Agapitus, popett of Rome, whyche fyrst dreamed it out, and enacted it for a laudyble ceremonye of your whoryshe churche, for Christ knoweth it not. But I marvele sore that ye observe yt upon Saturdayes at nyght at evensonge, he comaundynge yt to be observed upon the sondayes in the mornynge betwixt holie-water-makynge and hygh masse."—There were two popes of the name of Agapitus; one, a Roman by birth, who was elected to the papal chair in 535; and a second, who arrived at the same dignity in 916. It is to the first of these that Bale alludes

* Brand's Popular Antiquities, vol. i.—p. 278.

In Yorkshire, "the principal characters in this farce are the conductors of the plough, the plough driver with a blown bladder at the end of a stick by way of whip, the fiddler, a huge clown in female attire, and the commander-in-chief *Captain Cauf-Tail*, dressed out with a cockade and a genuine calf's tail, fantastically crossed with various coloured ribbands. This whimsical hero is also an orator and a dancer, and is ably supported by the manual wit of the plough driver who applies the bladder with great and sounding effect to the heads and shoulders of his team,"* who are ploughmen harnessed in the place of horses or oxen.

In some places the ceremony was of a much more simple nature. A number of men,—often as many as twenty—would be harnessed to a plough and draw it about before the houses and cottages, when if they received the expected gift they would cry out, "largess" and go on again; but if refused at any dwelling they would drive their plough through the pavement and raise up the ground in front of it.† But in other parts women were harnessed to the plough and the ceremony took place on Ash Wednesday, when it had a very different meaning, though it doubtless had the same origin. The maidens selected for the

* COSTUME OF YORKSHIRE,—Plate xi, p. 29. 4to. London, 1814. This writer says that the *Fool Plough* is better known in Yorkshire, under the name of *Plough Stots*. This may be; but when he would derive the word STOTT from the German STUTZE, a *prop*, he is guilty of an absurdity too manifest to need refutation.

† See HUTCHINSON'S HISTORY OF NORTHUMBERLAND, vol. ii. p. 18, —Appendix. But in Derbyshire there was yet another variety of the custom, as recorded by Doctor Samuel Pegge, under the fictitious name of T. Row, in the Gentleman's Magazine for December, 1762, p. 568, vol. xxxii. "On this day the young men yoke themselves and draw a plough about with music; and one or two persons in antic dresses, like Jack Puddings, go from house to house, to gather money to drink; if you refuse them *they plough up your dunghill*. We call them here the *Plough-bullocks*."—NOTE. On the Christmas Festivals.

purpose were such as were supposed to have addicted themselves too much to dancing throughout the year, and in this guise they were driven into the nearest piece of water, a piper playing all the time as he sat upon the plough. Boemus Aubanus, who records this Franconian mode of treating the women, is much puzzled to account for it, except it be that the fair transgressors submitted voluntarily to be thus harnessed and ducked, by way of expiating their sins in having been too fond of holy-day making contrary to the express inhibitions of the church.* Another writer tells much the same story with the addition of a whip being used by the driver of this female team, while a man follows the plough with antic gestures but grave face, and sows the furrows with sand or ashes.†

With these broader scenes our ancestors contrived to slip in something of a moral, much as some writers of comedy contrive to season five acts of intrigue with a moral inference at the end. Well and wisely discourses the author of Tusser Redivivus upon this subject.—"After Christmas (which formerly during the Twelve Days was a time of very little work) every gentleman feasted the

* "In die cinerum mirum est quod in plerisque locis agitur. Virgines, quotquot per annum choream frequentaverunt, a juvenibus congregantur, et aratro pro equis advectæ (qy. *adjectæ* ?) cum tibicine, qui super illud modulans sedet, in fluvium aut lacum trahuntur. Id quare fiat non planè video, nisi cogitem eas per hoc expiare velle quòd festis diebus contra ecclesiæ præceptum a levitate sua non abstinuerint." Orbis Terrarum Epitome, lib. iii. cap. xv. p. 237.

† "Est ubi se sociant juvenes, tibicine sumpto,
Et famulas rapiunt ex ædibus, atque ad aratum
Jungunt, quas scutica pellitque ac dirigit unus.
Unus item stivam tenet; et tibicen aratri
Considet in medio, ridendasque occinit odas.
Unus item sequitur sator; is vel spargit arenam,
Vel fatuo cinerem gestu vultuque severo."
Regnum Papisticum. *T. Naogeorgo Autore.* Lib. iv. p. 144.

farmers, and every farmer their servants and task-men. *Plough Monday* puts them in mind of their business. In the morning the men and maid-servants strive who shall show their diligence in rising earliest. If the plowman can get his whip, his plough-staff, hatchet, or any thing that he wants in the field, by the fire-side before the maid has got the kettle on, then the maid loses her shrove-tide cock, and it wholly belongs to the men. Thus did our forefathers strive to allure youth to their duty, and provided them innocent mirth as well as labour. On Plough-Monday they have a good supper, and some strong drink."*

I have already alluded to the popish origin of Plough-Monday, and in two customs yet to be mentioned we shall see the undeniable proofs of it. The first of these was the *plough-light*, maintained by the husbandman before some image.† It will perhaps be replied that this was not necessarily connected with the day itself, since for ought that appears to the contrary it may have burnt at other times; but allowing such to be the case, the same cannot be said of the drawing the plough about the fire upon this day, a custom evidently springing from the same source as the many fire-observances already noticed.‡

* Tusser Redivivus, p. 79. 8vo. London. 1744.

† Bloomfield's History of Norfolk, vol. iv. p. 287. Folio, Lynn. 1775.

‡ It is mentioned in the thirty-fourth chapter of Dives and Pauper (sig. e. ii.) amongst the things prohibited by law—"Ledynge of the plough about the fire as for gode begynnyng of the yere that they shulde fare the better alle the yere followyng &c." But, though the form of the rites might vary, most nations have had their sacred ploughings; the Greeks, the Persians, and the Chinese had them beyond a question. The Athenians had three sacred ploughings; the first upon the place called *Scirus*, the earliest record of sowing; the second in the Rarian plain; and the third close to the city, called from the yoke of oxen, *Buzy-*

SAINT AGNES DAY.—*January* 21. Saint Agnes, or, as it is more correctly written Hagnes,*—was a Roman young lady, of only thirteen years of age, who had the misfortune as she passed to and fro in her daily visits to school to be seen and admired by the son of the city-prefect, Symphorianus. As she did not choose to return

gium, or the *Ox-ploughing*.—'Αθηναῖοι τρεῖς ἀράτους ἱεροὺς ἄγουσι, πρῶτον ἐπὶ Σκίρῳ, τοῦ παλαιοτάτου τῶν σπόρων ὑπόμνημα, δεύτερον ἐν τῇ 'Ραρίᾳ, τρίτον ὑπὸ πόλιν τον καλούμενον βουζύγιον. PLUTARCHI CONJUGALIA PRÆCEPTA.—*Opera*; tom. vi. p. 544; edit. Reiskii; 8vo. Lipsiæ, 1777. But all forms of fire-worship, however they may be immediately derived, are uniformly found, when traced up to their source, to originate in, or in some way to be connected with, the worship of the sun. Of course I do not pretend to say that in this country we had such observances from the fountain-head; on the contrary they would mostly appear to be the popish corruptions of pagan superstitions, as an example of which I may notice the Roman-Catholic ceremony of walking about the city in procession with lighted candles in their hands on the day of the *Purification*. The proud and dogmatic Innocent the Third himself allows that this was borrowed from the customs of the old Romans, who did the same thing in commemoration of Ceres seeking her daughter Proserpine in the night-time throughout Sicily, and we hardly need look for better authority. (SERMONES DE TEMPORE; Coloniæ; 1575—*In Fest. Purif. Serm. I.*) It is also mentioned by Belethus, and I quote the passage as being moreover illustrative of another point,—namely, why the second of February is called Candlemas Day. "Quare autem CANDELARIA vocetur aliam authoritatem non habet, sed potius fluxum est ab antiqua consuetudine ethnicorum sive gentilium. Erat enim antiquitùs Romæ consuetudo, ut circa hoc tempus in principio Februario urbem lustrarent, eam ambiendo cum suis processionibus gestantes singuli candelas ardentes, et vocabatur illud *amburbale*." DIVIN. OFFIC. EXPLICATIO, a *Joanne Beletho*. Cap. 81. p. 347. Other reasons—for there is never any want of reason in these cases—will be found in the proper place under the head of February.

* "Agnes beatissima (quam rectius *Hagnem* appellaveris) cujus passionem Romæ celebratam describit Ambrosius."—DIVI ANTONINI CHRONICARUM OPUS; in tres partes divisum—*Pars Prima*; p. 451, cap. i. *De Sanctis Martyribus*, sect. 39, Tit. viii; *De Plurib. Martyr. Passis*. Folio; Lugd. 1586.

his passion, the angry lover caused her to be thrown into the flames, and, these being extinguished by her prayers, recourse was had, as was usual in all such cases, to the sword, when either she forgot to pray, or prayers are naturally of no avail in blunting the edge of steel; the good sword did its office,* and she was elected into the

* These facts are recorded by many writers—"Duodecimo Kal. Februarii. Romæ passio Sanctæ Agnetis, virginis, quæ sub præfecto urbis Symphronio ignibus injecta, sed, iis per orationem ejus extinctis, gladio percussa est." Martyrologium Romanum. a *C. Baronio Sorano*, fol. 60. 4to. Col. Agrip. 1603.—So too in Bede; "xii. Calend. Febr. Natale beatæ Agnetis virginis et martyris, quæ tertio-decimo ætatis suæ anno in urbe Roma passa est. Hæc dum ab scholis revertitur, a præfecti filio adamatur; quam cum nullo modo sibi associare valuisset, post multa tormenta in gutture ejus gladio percussa est. Bedæ Martyrologium.—*Opera.*—Tom. iii. p. 281.—Bede calls the prefect Simphorianus; by Baron the name is written *Symphronius*, probably by a typical blunder. The story however gains much in the narration of Antoninus, the archbishop of Florence, who has epitomized it from Ambrosius. According to these learned authorities, the Prefect indignant at his son's rejection by the lady, and finding out she was a Christian, gave her the choice of two things; "aut sacrifica diis cum virginibus deæ Vestæ, aut cum meretricibus scortaberis in contubernio lupanaris."—"Either sacrifice to the Gods with the Vestal Virgins, or be a prostitute in the common stews." To this, Agnes flatly replied that she would do neither the one nor the other, whereupon the prefect commanded her to be stript; but God gave such encrease to her hair that it concealed her better than any garment, and upon entering the house of sin she found an angel of the Lord already there, who spread about the place an excessive light, and had prepared for her a white robe. All, who entered, were astounded and paid adoration to this miraculous refulgence, except the Prefect's son; he attempted to rush into the midst of it, but instantly fell down and expired. This catastrophe worked so effectually upon the father, that he would fain have liberated her; not however daring to do this, he turned the business over to his deputy, Aspasius, and he committed her to the flames, which instead of touching her divided into two parts and burnt up the people, so that as a last resource he was compelled to plunge a sword into her throat. See the Chronicarum Opus Divi Antonini. *Pars Prima*, p. 554.—Cap. I; *De Sanctis Martyris.*—Tit. viii. *De Plurib Martyr. passis.*

host of Saints, as was made manifest by her appearance on the eighth day after her decease. It was then that her parents, who were praying at her tomb, beheld a choir of virgins all radiant in shining garments, and in the midst of them the blessed Agnes similarly attired, while at her right hand stood a lamb, whiter than snow.* Hence in the pictures of her she is always painted with a lamb; and yearly also on this day two are offered to her by the Roman women, which are then placed in some rich pasture 'till the time comes for sheep-shearing, when they are clipt and their wool woven by some dexterous hand into an archepiscopal pall, or pallium.†

If saints and saints' days were not things altogether beyond the pale of human reason, we might wonder how so bitter an enemy to the marriage-state as far as concerned herself should ever be induced to reveal to curious maids and bachelors the forms of their future partners in wedlock. Yet so it was—"On St. Agnes night," says Aubrey, "take a row of pins and pull out every one, one after another, saying a *pater-noster* or *our father*, sticking a pin in your sleeve, and you will dream of him or her

* "Cum octavo die parentes ejus juxta tumulum ipsius vigilarent orando, viderunt chorum virginum fulgidis vestibus radiantem, inter quas viderunt B. Agnetem simili veste fulgentem, et a dextris ejus agnum stantem nive candidiorem." ANTONINI CHRONIC: OPUS; loco citato.

† "Namque in ea binos agnos candore nivali
Agnetis templi monachæ primam super aram,
Dum celebrantur sacra Dei cantatur et Agnus,
(Ad rem nempe hæc cuncta) solent afferre quotannis.
Hos dein pontificis mittunt in læta ministri
Pascua, tondendi dum opportuna appetat hora.
Candida detonsæ miscetur tum altera lanæ;
Indeque prægnanti torquentur stamina fuso,
Ex quibus arguta texuntur pallia dextra."

REGNUM PAPISTICUM. *a T. Naogeorgo.* Lib. iv. p. 136. 12mo. Basileæ. 1559.

you shall marry."* Fasting however, according to some authorities, was a requisite part of the ceremony, or perhaps if this were observed the pin-sticking might be dispensed with: thus in the old comedy of CUPID'S WHIRLIGIG, the alderman's daughter, Nan, tells her friend that she could find in her heart "to pray nine times to the moone, and *fast three Saint Agnes' Eves* so that I might bee sure to have him to my husband."† So too Burton; "they'll give any thing to know when they shall be married, how many husbands they shall have by *cromnyomantia*‡ a kinde of divination with onions laid on the altar on Christmass Eve, or by *fasting on St. Agnes' Eve*,§ *or*

* The same superstition was attached also to Saint Anne's, or Saint Anna's night, that is July the 26th.

"She can start our Franklin's daughters
In her (their) sleep with shrieks and laughters;
And on sweet St Anna's night
Feed them with a promised sight
Some of husbands, some of lovers,
Which an empty dream discovers."

Ben Jonson's Masque of the *Satyr*—Works; vol. vi. p. 472.

Upon this, however, Whalley observes, and his note is quoted by Giffard in silence—"the feat it alludes to is sometimes said to be performed upon St. Agnes' night; and 'tis possible this might have been the original reading." It may perhaps be deemed a confirmation of Whalley's conjecture that Aubrey, when quoting the same passage, observes in a marginal note, "'tis printed St. Anne's night falsely."—AUBREY'S MISCELLANIES, p. 104, chap. xiii.—MAGIC, p. 104. 8vo. London. 1696

† *Actus Ter.—Scena prima.* Sig. E. 2. 4to. London. 1616.—And sig. E. 3. Edit. 1630.

‡ From two Greek words, κρόμμυον *an onion*, and μάντεια, divination.

§ It is not a little singular that here again we should have the same confusion between St. Anne and St. Agnes, that I have already noticed; the edition of the ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY published in 1660 has St. *Agnes*: that in 1676 has St. *Anne*.

night, who shall be their first husband; or *by Amphitomantia*, by beans in a cake, &c., to burn the same."*

St. Paul's Day.—*January* 25. The conversion of St. Paul, from which this day has its name, is by some writers supposed to have occurred two years after Christ's Ascension,† by others not till seven,‡ and by others again it is placed in the same year with the crucifixion.§

It was on this day that the husbandmen of old used to make prognostics of the weather, and of other matters for the whole year, a custom, which Bourne has laboured to unravel with much laudable gravity. That he failed to do so will surprise no one; and perhaps it was hardly worth while to inflict some eight or ten pages upon his readers to convince them of the fact.‖ *Mayster Erra Pater* sets to work much more scholarly and wisely, by laying down the infallible rules by which such prognostics may be made.

"*A lytell rule of S. Paules daye, otherwyse called the Conversation of S. Paule.*

"*The sayenge of Erra Pater to the Husbande man.*

If that the daye
of S. Paule be cheare¶
Than shall betyde
an happy yere.

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* *Robert Burton's* Anatomy of Melancholy. Part 3, Sect. 2.—Memb. 4; Subs. 1.

† "Conversio sancti Pauli, Apostoli, quæ fuit secundo ab ascensione Domini anno." Martyrologium Romanum, a *Cæsare Baronio Sorano*. Octavo Kalend. Februarii, p. 74. 4to. Col. Agripp. 1603

‡ "Fuit enim quorundam opinio, sanctũ Paulum post septennium ab Ascensione Domini Christo nomen dedisse; idque ex Hippolyto Thebano Michael Glycas in tertia Annalium parte, et Niceph. Lib. 2, Cap. 3. Evodii auctoritate confirmare nituntur." Id. p. 75.

§ "Conversio sancti Pauli, Apostoli, facta est eodem anno quo Christus passus est et Stephanus lapidatus, anno quidem non naturali seu emergenti," Guliel. Durandi Rationale Divinorum Officiorum. Lib. vii cap. iv.

‖ Bourne's Antiquitates Vulgares. Chap. xviii. p. 159.

¶ An evident misprint for *cleare*, i. e. *clear*.

Yf it do chaunce
to snowe or rayne,
Then shall be deare
all kynde of grayne.
But and the wynde
then be a lofte,
Warres shall vexe
this Realme full ofte.
And yf the Clowdes
make darke the skye
Both neate and Fowle
that yeare shall dye."*

If the reader objects to the version of old Erra Pater here is a second given by Willsford,†

"If Saint Paul's Day be fair and clear,
It does betide a happy year;
But if it chance to snow or rain
Then will be dear all kind of grain;
If clouds or mist do dark the skie
Great store of beasts and birds shall die;
And if the winds do fly aloft
Then wars shall vex that kingdom oft."

The weather of the whole year thus depending on the humour in which St. Paul might chance to be upon his feast-day, the people made no scruple of showing their resentment if by his wearing cloudy looks at such a time he disappointed their hopes for the season. In many

* "The Pronostycacion for ever of Erra Pater: A Jewe borne in Jewery, a Doctour in Astronomye and Physycke. Profitable to kepe the bodye in helth. And also Ptholomeus sayth the same." No date is affixed to this work, but it is stated to be "Emprinted by me, Robert Wyer, dwellynge at the Sygne of Seynt John Evangelist in Seynt Martyn's Parysshe besyde Charynge Crosse. There is however another edition by the same printer, in which the above lines are not given, and in which the three or four last pages differ considerably. A third reprint by Thomas Este varies yet more, omitting much, adding a few things, and giving the substance of many parts in other words.

† Nature's Secrets, p. 145. 8vo. London. 1658.

parts of Germany they dragged his image to the river on these occasions, and there soused him well in effigy.*

This notion, however fallacious, must at one time have been very general, for we not only find it repeatedly mentioned by our own writers, but we have the evidence of Olaus Wormius for its having existed among the Northern nations. The Latin lines he has quoted on the subject are to the same effect as the prediction in English by Erra Pater.†

* "SCHENCK'S TREATISE ON IMAGES, chap. xii.—as quoted by Brand. vol. i. page 83.

† "Clara dies Pauli bona tempora denotat anni;
Si fuerint venti, designant prælia genti;
Si fuerint nebulæ, pereunt animalia quæque;
Si nix aut pluviæ, redduntur tempora cara."

FASTI DANICI—ab *Olao Wormio*, p. 111. Lib. ii. cap. 9, sect. 9. A version, somewhat differing from this, but the same in substance, is given by Hearne in his edition of ROB. DE AVESBURY; HIST. EDUARDI TERTII. *Minutiæ*, p. 266. And again we find them in Hospinian (*De Festis Christianorum;* p. 38.) with a grave caution that no faith is to be placed in the prognostication—

"Ne credas certè, nam fallet regula sæpe."

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

Divinations in Advent.—Two sorts of divination are practiced at this period by girls desirous of learning the temper of their future husbands. The first mode was by taking from four to eight onions and scratching on each of them the names they most fancied; these they set in the chimney-corner, and whichever was the first to sprout, that one bore the name of the future help-mate. The next method was by going out at night and drawing a single stick from a wood-stack, but without attempting to pick or choose; if it turned out straight and even, and without knots, then the husband would be gentle; if on the contrary it proved knotty and crooked, then the husband would be a churl.*

* "Illis divinant etiam inquiruntque diebus
Aptæ connubio jam lasciviæque puellæ
Nomine de sponsi, quicunque est ille futurus.
Quatuor accipiunt cæpas, vel quinque, vel octo,
Atque indunt certum nomen præ aliisque cupitum
Cuique; dein propter fornacem ex ordine ponunt;
Et quæ prima suum protrudit cæpula germen,
Illius haud dubiè nomen quoque sponsus habebit.
Inquirunt etiam sponsi moresque animumque,
Sol postquam occiduus cælum terrasque reliquit;
Namque struem lignorum adeunt tum, perque tenebras
Fortuito inde sudem casu quæque extrahit unam,

Lunar Superstition.—In Wiltshire it is said to be unlucky to look at the new moon first through a window. As to the man in the moon himself, some have supposed that the idea has arisen from that passage in the book of Numbers, where a man is stoned to death for gathering sticks upon a Sunday.* But indeed by some strange caprice of superstition the moon has had more traditions and observances connected with her than the sun itself, and not improbably because the night, the time of her predominance, is better calculated to create and nourish such fancies than the cheerful day. To name only a few of them. Whoever prays for any thing when the moon is in conjunction with Jupiter and the Dragon's head, will be sure to obtain it.† But though this aphorism would seem to apply equally to either sex, yet of lovers it was more especially the women, who paid their vows to the moon, while men sought similar favours of the sun, a distinction for which no cause has been assigned, so far as I know, by the learned in such high mysteries.‡ In other respects the moon was of doubtful augury, being evil or propitious according to the state in which she was at the time; thus, wood cut at the full of the moon is affected with blight and rottenness;§

Quæ fierit si recta et nullis horrida nodes
Commodus ac comis speratur ritè maritus;
Sin vero prava et nodis incommoda duris
Improbulum ac pravum sperant obtingere sponsum."

[HOMÆ NAOGEORGI REGNUM PAPISTICUM.—Lib. iv. p. 130. 12mo. 1559.

* NUMBERS. Chap. xv. ver. 32—36.

† "Qui, Luna, inquit Albumazar, Jovi, conjuncta cum Capite Draconico, supplicaverit, quicquid petierit procul dubio impetrabit." CÆLIUS RHODIGINUS. *Lectiones Antiquæ*, p. 645. F.

‡ "Scribit tamen Pindarus, ex amantibus soli quidem viros vota concipere, lunæ autem fœminas." Idem, p. 205. H.

§ "Succisa ligna in plenilunio carie conficiuntur, tunc rubigo infestat." DE ADMIRANDIS FACULTATIBUS. *Autore D. H. Montuo*,

neither is it good to voyage in the interval between the old and new moon or in an eclipse of that luminary.* Then too different objects are affected by it in different manners; many things for instance, that encrease with the encreasing moon, cease to grow and become sapless when she wanes; while on the other hand some roots, such as the onion, germinate with the waning moon, and dry up as she waxes.†

Next as to the names and qualities of the moon. It is white because it rules the waters, whose nature it is to become white in concretion.‡ It was called Melissa as the presiding deity of generation,§ and Diana herself was named *threeformed* from the triple aspects of the moon—the *horned*; the *half-moon*; and the *full moon*.‖

Spayed Bitches.—I believe all over England a spaied bitch is accounted wholesome; that is to say, they have

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No. 71; Cent. Secunda, p. 40. 12mo. Lugduni. 1556. This is printed with the MEMORABILIA of Mizaldus, forming the latter part of the volume.

* "Silente aut deficiente luna non esse navigandum expertus est Synesius." Idem. No. 73. Cent. ii, p. 40.

† "*Omnia* quæ crescente luna gliscunt deficiente contra desinunt exuccaque sunt. Quamquam in quibusdam est antipathia, nam cepe, teste Plutarcho, luna decedente revirescit ac congerminat. Inarescitque eadem adolescente." Idem. No. 68; Cent. vi. p. 39. He afterwards adds that the onion is the *only* one root that acts by lunar antipathies, his text not being very consistent with itself.

‡ "Album porro colorem lunæ contribuunt quoniam aquis dominetur is planeta, quarum natura est uti concretione inalbescant. L. CÆLIUS RHODIGINUS. *Lectiones Antiq.* Lib. xxvi. cap. 9, p. 1207. D.

§ "Lunam quoque generationis præsidem, Melissam dixere." CÆLIUS RHODIGINUS, Lib. xxii. cap. 3, p. 1028. F. But the priests of Ceres were also called *Melissas*.

‖ "Quia vero triplicem faciat visitationem Luna—quum surgit in cornua et falcata dicitur—quumque dimidia est—et quum orbe circumacto—hinc propagatum autumant poeticum commentum de triformi Diana." Id. Lib. xx; cap. vi; p. 927. D.

a strong belief that it keeps away evil spirits from haunting of a house; e. g. among many other instances, at Cranborn in Dorsetshire about 1686 a house was haunted and two tenants successively went away for that reason; a third came and brought his spaied bitch, and was never troubled.*

Charm against Night-hags.

"Bring the holy crust of bread,
Lay it underneath the head;
'Tis a certain charm to keep
Hags away while children sleep."†

The Knife-Charm.

"Let the superstitious wife
Neer the child's heart lay a knife,
Point be up, and haft be downe,
(While she gossips in the towne;)
This 'mongst other mystick charms
Keeps the sleeping child from harms."‡

Stable-Charm.

"Hang up hooks and sheers, to scare
Hence the hag that rides the mare
'Till they be all over wet
With the mire and the sweat;
This observ'd the mares shall be
Of your horses all knot-free."§

*Aubrey's Remains of Gentilisme, &c. MS.: Bibl.: Lansdown,—folio 130.

† Herrick's Hesperides, p. 336. ‡ Id. Idem. § Idem. p. 234.

THE MONTHS—FEBRUARY.

VERSTEGAN tells us this month was called by our Saxon ancestors, *sprout-kele*, "by *kele* meaning the *kele-wort*, which we now call the *colewurt*, the greatest *potwurt* in time long past that our ancestors used, and the broth made therewith was thereof also called *kele;* for before we borrowed from the French the name of *potage* and the name of *herbs*, the one in our own language was called *kele*, and the other *wurt;* and as this *kele-wurt*, or *potage-hearbe*, was the chief *winter-wurt* for the sustenance of the husbandman, so was it the first hearbe that in this moneth began to yield out wholesome young sprouts, and consequently gave thereunto the name of *sprout-kele*."*

It had also the name of *Solmonath*, which Bede explains by *Pan-cake-month*, because in the course of it cakes were offered up by the Pagan Saxons to the sun, and *sol*, or *soul* signified "food, or cakes." It is scarcely necessary to add that the Latin Februarius, the origin of our Fe-

* Restitution of Decayed Intelligence, p. 64, ed. 1674.

bruary, was derived from *februa**, an expiatory, or purifying sacrifice offered to the Manes, because in that month the Luperci, or priests of Pan, perambulated the city, carrying thongs of goat-skin, with which they scourged the women, and this was received for an expiation. Hence we have the word, though it is now well-nigh obsolete, of *februation*, in the meaning of a purification.

February has in general an ill name, and often worse than he deserves, for notwithstanding his thaws and clammy colds he shows some symptoms of the spring, though it must be granted that he is not always a very smiling harbinger. In his train appear many flowers, and all the more charming from their coming at a season that is otherwise somewhat dreary; the *Primrose* flowers and shows its pale blossoms on every bank; the *double Daisies* begin to blow; the *fruitless Strawberry*, the *Butchers' Broom*, the *yellow Coltsfoot*, will also open; and the *Early Whitlow Grass* flowers on old walls and the dry sides of fields. Then too, comes the early *Cyclomen*, but he requires the shelter of a green-house; the *Oriental Hyacinth*, an in-doors companion; the *Heart's Ease*, or *Pansie;* the *Polyanthus;* the *Yellow Spring Crocus;* the *Old Cloth of Gold Crocus;* the *Persian Iris*, but he requires shelter; the *Wall Speedwell;* the *Field Speedwell;* the *Noble Liverwort;* the *Particoloured Crocus;* the *Daisy*, or *Herb-Margaret;* the *Officinal Coltsfoot;* the *White Willow;* the *Brittle Willow;* the *Long-leaved Osier:* the *Ivy-leaved Veronica;* the *Purple Spring Crocus;* and the *Shepherd's Purse;* a goodly catalogue of friends and visitors for so dull a gentleman as February is usually held to be, and one which speaks very fairly for his character. But he has other acquaintance whose tes-

* Februa has by some been supposed synonymous with Juno, and the manifest relation between the *Februata Juno* and the *Purificata Virgo Maria* is one of the many singular coincidences between Pagan and Christian rites. They are much too numerous to have been the effect of mere accident.

timony is no less favourable. The wood-lark, one of the earliest and sweetest of our songsters, does him homage; and the green wood-pecker is heard in the forest; while the goats play about, and gnats swarm under the sunny hedges. Then too, he has more days of note than any other month in the year. In the very outset there is Candlemas Eve, his birth-day, as we may call it, since it falls upon the first, a time which our forefathers celebrated with a multitude of pleasing and significant ceremonies. They kindled the *yule-brand*, and allowed it to burn till sunset, when it was quenched and carefully laid by to *teend* the Christmas clog, or log, at the next return of the season,

> "And, where 'tis safely kept, the fiend
> Can do no mischief there."*

The rosemary, the bay, the ivy, the holly, and the misletoe, the Christmas decorations of hall and cottage, were now pulled down, when according to the popular superstition not a branch, nor even a leaf, should be allowed to remain,

> "For look, how many leaves there be
> So many goblins you shall see."†

In their place, however, the "greener box was upraised," and Christmas now was positively at an end. Some, indeed, considered this to have been the case on Twelfth Night; and old Tusser, in his "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry," strongly contends for it; but then his head was more full of the cart and plough than of regard for old customs: and, like any other master, he was naturally anxious that the holidays should be ended, and the labourers should get to work again as soon as possible; and certes, merry-making, however agreeable it may be, will not help to dig the land or sow the grain. But in spite of these wise saws, the truth of

* Herrick. † Herrick.

which nobody would contest, human feelings are stronger than human reason, and customs, when they tend to pleasure, will maintain their ground, till they are superseded—not by privations, but by other forms of amusement. Having therefore tolerated the rites of Candlemas Eve, we may as well put up with those of Candlemas Day. And why was it called Candlemas? hear how Pope Innocent replies to the question, in a sermon upon this festival, quoted in *Pagano Papismus* —"Because the Gentiles dedicated the month of February to the infernal gods, and as at the beginning of it Pluto stole Proserpine; and her mother, Ceres, sought her in the night with lighted candles, so they, in the beginning of this month, walked about the city with lighted candles; because the holy fathers could not utterly extirpate this custom, they ordained that Christians should carry about candles in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary; and thus what was done before to the honour of Ceres is now done to the honour of the Virgin."

There can be little doubt that this is the real origin of the custom, though Butler, upon the authority of St. Bernard, states, that the candlebearing at this season had reference to Simeon's declaration in the Temple, when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that he was "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel." Few, however, will be inclined to accept this far-fetched derivation when one so much more obvious is at hand.

From whatever cause the ceremony originated, it acquired many additional rites in the process of time, according to the manners and habits of those who adopted it. We are told in Dunstan's Concord of Monastic Rules, that "the monks went in surplices to the church for candles," which were to be consecrated, sprinkled with holy water, and censed by the abbot. Every monk took a candle from the sacrist and lighted it. A procession was

made, thirds and mass were celebrated, and the candles, after the offering, were presented to the priest. The monks' candles signified the use of them in the parable of the wise virgins."

Other authorities tell us that there was on this day a general consecration of all the candles to be burnt in the Catholic churches throughout the whole year; and it is probable enough that all these customs may have prevailed at various times and in different places. It should also be mentioned that from Candlemas the use of tapers at vespers and litanies, which had continued through the whole winter, ceased until the ensuing *All-Hallow Mass*, which will serve to explain the old English proverb in Ray's Collection—

> "On Candlemas Day
> Throw candle and candlestick away."

The ceremony of carrying Candlemas candles continued in England, till it was repealed for its Popish tendency by an order in council in the second year of King Edward VI. Still the many and various customs, that grew out of it, could not be extirpated by any legal enactments. They assumed a multitude of forms, the innate signification of which is now as much lost to us as that of the characters upon the Egyptian pyramids. Thus Hone tells us, from the communication of some unnamed individual, of a custom that prevailed in Lynne Regis, and which, so far as he knew, was confined to a single family—"The wood-ashes of the family being sold throughout the year as they were made, the person who purchased them annually sent a present at Candlemas Day of a large candle. When night came, the candle was lighted, and, assisted by its illumination, the inmates regaled themselves with cheering draughts of ale and sippings of punch, or some other animating beverage, until the candle had burnt out. The coming of the Candlemas candle was looked forward

to by the young ones as an event of some consequence, for of usage they had a sort of right to sit up all night and partake of the refreshments till all retired to rest, the signal for which was the self-extinction of the Candlemas candle."

The peculiar merits of this day are not yet exhausted. It was a favourite epoch for drawing prognostics of the weather, it being held on all hands that the second of February ought on no account to be fine; Aubrey quotes from some forgotten record,

> "Si sol splendescat Maria purificante
> Major erit glacies post festum quam fuit ante."

Considering the general state of the weather in February, this was prophecying on the safe side of the question, and we need not be surprized therefore if we find others following in the same track. Bishop Hall informs us in a sermon upon Candlemas, "it hath been an old —I say not how true—note, that hath been wont to be set on this day, that if it be clear and sun-shiny, it portends a hard weather to come; if cloudy and louring, a mild and gentle season ensuing." And Ray says,

> "The hind had as lief see
> his wife on the bier,
> As that Candlemas Day
> should be pleasant and clear."

In the "Country Almanack" again, for 1676, we find a similar doctrine advanced;

> "Foul weather is no news;
> hail, rain, and snow
> Are now expected, and
> esteemed no woe;
> Nay, 'tis an omen bad,
> the yeomen say
> If Phœbus shows his face
> the second day" — i.e. of February.

But enough of Candlemas Day. Its tapers are burnt

out, and the joyful song of the birds, who are beginning to choose their mates, announce that Valentine Day is come, the whole burthen of which seems with us to have fallen on the unlucky postman. He now finds that love is no such light matter, whatever other folks may think, for is he not transformed for the nonce into Cupid's messenger, albeit his blue coat and red collar have nothing very etherial in them?

Saint Valentine?—all we know of this holy personage is that he was a priest at Rome, where he was martyred about 270, and had in consequence the honour of being assigned a niche in the record of Saints, his post being the 14th of February. Enquiries have been made, but hitherto in vain, to discover what the good bishop had done that should entitle him to have this day above all others appropriated to him. We have only, however, to suppose that his martyrdom took place on the 14th, and the whole mystery is solved, all the other peculiarities of the day being merely accidents, that had nothing to do with his individual character, and which would have as readily attached to any one else, who had met with the good fortune of being sainted at that particular season.

The origin of this custom has been sought for in the Lupercalia of the Romans, and with much apparent reason, as will be evident when we come to enquire into the old mode of celebrating Valentine's Day, which, as we shall presently see, had but little in common with the modern habit of sending silly letters by the penny post. In ancient Rome a festival was held about the middle of February, called the *Lupercalia*, in honour of Pan and Juno, whence the latter obtained the epithet of *Februata Februalis*, and *Fabrulla*. Upon this occasion the names of young women were put, amidst a variety of ceremonies, into a box, from which they were drawn by the men as chance directed, and so rooted had this, like many other

customs, become amongst the people, that the pastors of the early Christian church found themselves unable to eradicate it. They therefore, instead of entering into a fruitless struggle, adopted their usual policy on such occasions, and since they could not remove what they held to be an unsightly nuisance, they endeavoured, as a skilful architect would do, to convert it into an ornament. Thus they substituted the names of Saints for those of women, a change that would not seem to have been generally, or for any long time, popular, since we read that at a very remote period the custom prevailed of the young men drawing the names of the girls, and that the practice of adopting mates by chance-lots soon grew reciprocal between the sexes. In fact Pan and Juno vacated their seats in favour of Saint Valentine, but the Christian bishop could not escape having much of the heathen ritual fastened upon him. We must not, however, imagine that Valentine's Day, any more than Epiphany or Candlemas, was celebrated with one uniform mode of observance; the customs attendant upon it varied considerably according to the place and period. In many parts of England, and more particularly in London, the person of the opposite sex, who is first met in the morning, not being an inmate of the house, was taken to be the Valentine, a usage that is noticed by the poet, Gay,

> "I early rose just at the break of day
> Before the sun had chas'd the stars away;
> A-field I went, amid the morning dew,
> To milk my kine (for so should housewives do)
> The first I spied, and the first swain we see
> In spite of fortune our true love shall be."

That the lasses went out to seek for their makes, or mates, *i. e.* Valentines, is also shown in poor Ophelia's broken snatches of a song;

> "Good morrow! 'tis St. Valentine's day
> All in the morning betime,

And I a maid at your window
To be your valentine."

In the Gentlemen's Magazine for 1779, a correspondent under the name of Kitty Curious, relates an odd ceremony that she has been witness to in some humble village in Kent. The girls from five or six to eighteen years old were assembled in a crowd, burning an uncouth effigy, which they called a *holly-boy*, and which they had stolen from the boys, while in another part of the village the boys were burning what they called an *ivy girl*, which they had stolen from the girls. The ceremony of each burning was attended with huzzas and other acclamations according to the receipt of custom in all such cases.

The Monday before *Shrove Tuesday* was in old times called *Collop Monday*, "collop" being a term for slices of dried or salted meat, as "steak" signifies a slice of fresh meat. The etymology is too uncertain to make it worth while to quote the different accounts of it, but upon this day it was customary to feast upon eggs and collops, and, as Lent was approaching, our ancestors used to cut up their meat in slices, and preserve it, till the season of fast was over, by salting, or drying it. In some parts the day seemed to have been kept as the vigil, or eve, of Shrove Tuesday, and in the neighbourhood of Salisbury, we are told, the boys went about from door to door, singing thus;

"Shrove-tide is nigh at hand,
And I am come a shroving;
Pray, dame, something,
An apple, or a dumpling,
Or a piece of truckle * cheese
Of your own making,
Or a piece of pancake."

The observance of this day originated, if we may be-

* Brand and Hone, who have both quoted these lines, pass over the *truckle-cheese* in silence, as if it involved no difficulty; nor can I offer any certain explanation of the etymology. The epithet *truckle*,

lieve Polydore Virgil, in the Roman feasts of Bacchus, and some vestiges of such an origin remain to the present time in the custom that the Eton boys have of writing verses at this *season in praise of the Lybian* God. These were composed in all kinds of measures and affixed to the college-doors.

Shrove Tuesday,—or Pancake Tuesday,—or Fasting's Even, Fasterns, Fasten, as it is sometimes called from being the vigil of Ash Wednesday, the commencement of the Lent Fast,—is a day of great importance in the ritual calendar. It is said to have got its first, and more general, appellation from the circumstance of its being a day when every one was bound to confess and be *shrove*, or shriven, so long as the Roman Catholic faith was predominant. That none might plead forgetfulness of this ceremony the great bell was rung at an early hour in every parish, and in after times this ringing was still kept up in some places, though the cause of it ceased with the introduction of Protestantism; it then got the name of the *Pancake-Bell*, for reasons which we shall see hereafter.

Notwithstanding this necessity for confession, Shrove Tuesday with us had all the features of the last day of the Italian carneval. What it was in the old time may be judged from the account given by Taylor, the Water-poet—"Always before Lent there comes waddling a fat, grosse, groome, called *Shrove Tuesday*, one whose manners shews he is better fed than taught, and indeed he is the only monster for feeding amongst all the dayes of the yeere, for he devoures more flesh in foureteene houres

which Hone, for some unexplained reason, prints with a capital *T*, may possibly have a reference to the round, *wheel-shaped* form of the cheese, for *truckle*, though well-nigh obsolete in that sense, was once commonly used for a *wheel*. However derived, the word is even now familiar both in Wiltshire and Dosetshire for a small, but superior kind of cheese.

than this old kingdom doth (or at the least should doe) in sixe weekes after. Such boyling and broyling, such roasting and toasting, such stewing and brewing, such baking, frying, mincing, cutting, carving, devouring, and gorbellied gurmondizing, that a man would thinke people did take in two month's provision at once. "Moreover it is a goodly sight to see how the cookes in great men's kitchins doe frye in their master's suet, that if ever a cooke be worth the eating, it is when Shrove Tuesday is in towne, for he is so stued and larded, basted, and almost over-roasted, that a man may eate every bit of him and never take a surfet. In a word, they are that day extreme cholerike, and too hot for any man to meddle with, being monarchs of the marow-bones, marquesses of the mutton, lords high regents of the spit and the kettle, barons of the gridiron, and sole commanders of the frying-pan. And all this hurly burly is for no other purpose than to stop the mouth of this land-wheale, *Shrove Tuesday*, at whose entrance in the morning all the whole kingdome is in quiet, but by the time the clocke strikes eleven—which by the help of a knavish sexton is commonly before nine,—then there is a bell rung called the *Pancake Bell*, the sound whereof makes thousands of people distracted and forgetful either of manner or humanitie. Then there is a thinge cal'd wheaten flowre, which the sulphory, necromanticke cookes doe mingle with water, egges, spice, and other tragicall, magicall inchantments, and then they put it by little and little into a frying pan of boyling suet, where it makes a confused dismal hissing —like the Lernean snakes in the reeds of Acheron, Stix, or Phlegeton,—until at last by the skill of the cooke it is transformed into the forme of a *Flap-Jack*, which in our translation is call'd a *pancake*, which ominous incantation the ignorant people doe devoure very greedily—having for the most part well dined before—but they have no

sooner swallowed that sweet candied baite, but straight their wits forsake them, and they runne starke mad, assembling in routs and throngs numberlesse of ungovernable numbers, with uncivill civill commotions.

"Then Tim Tatters—a most valiant villaine—with an ensign made of a piece of a baker's maukin* fixed upon a broome-staffe, he displaies his dreadful colours, and calling the ragged regiment together, makes an illiterate oration, stuft with most plentifull want of discretion, the conclusion whereof is, that somewhat they will doe, but what they know not; untill at last comes marching up another troupe of tatterdemalions, proclayming wars against no matter who, so they may be doing. Then these youths arm'd with cudgels, stones, hammers, rules, trowels, and handsawes, put play-houses to the sacke, and * * * to the spoyle, in the quarrel breaking a thousand *quarrels*†—of glasse, I meane—making ambitious brick-bats breake their neckes, tumbling from the tops of lofty chimnies, terribly untyling houses, ripping up the bowels of feather beds, to the inriching of upholsters, the profit

* Brand, who quotes this last paragraph, says that he does not know what to make of it, and Sir H. Ellis, after having twice edited the work, is, according to his general custom on such occasions, as mute as a Pythagorean. There is however no difficulty whatever in the passage. A *maukin*, or as it is sometimes written, *malkin*, is explained by Minshew to be "instrumentum quo verruntur furni calescentes," i.e. an instrument by which ovens are swept out; and it farther appears from him that the word was used either for a broom or a dishclout. Cotgrave too says "A maulkin to make clean an oven, *Patrouille, fourbalet*, stroffignolo del forno." Here it means the baker's dishclout, which was fastened to a pole as a flag for the merry rout, and borne aloft by Tim Tatters—i.e. Tatterdemalion—a fanciful, and not inappropriate, designation for the leader of 'the ragged regiment.'"

† It is perhaps hardly necessary to remind the reader that this is a pun upon the secondary meaning of the word "quarrel," i.e. a *pane of glass*, from the Latin, *quadrum*.

of plaisterers and dirt-dawbers, the gaine of glasiers, joyners, carpenters, tylers, and bricklayers; and, which is worse, to the contempt of justice; for what avails it for a constable with an army of reverend rusty bill-men to command peace to these beastes, for they with their pockets, instead of pistols, well charged with stone-shot, discharge against the image of authority whole volleys as thicke as hayle, which robustious repulse puts the better sort to the worser part, making the band of unscowred halberdiers retyre faster than ever they come on, and shew exceeding discretion in proving tall men of their heeles. Thus, by the unmanerly maners of *Shrove Tuesday*, constables are baffled, punckes are pillaged, panders are plagued, and the chiefe commanders of these valourous villiacoes, for their reward of all this confusion, doe in conclusion purchase the inheritance of a jayle, to the commodity of jailers, and the discommodity to themselves, with a fearfull expectation that Tiburne shall stoppe their throats, and the hangman take possession of their coates, or that some beadle in bloody characters shall imprint their faults on their shoulders. So much for *Shrove Tuesday*, Jacke-a-Lent's gentleman usher; these have beene his humours in former times, but I have some better hope of reformation in him hereafter and indeed I wrote this before his coming this yeere 1617, not knowing how hee would behave himselfe; but tottering betwixt despaire and hope I leave him."

With the apprentices of London this season was more particularly a time of revel; according to Dekker they "take the lawe into their own hands and doe what they liste."* One of their amusements was hunting and beating the poor creatures of the town, and it has been suggested from certain passages in the old dramatists that it was the custom at this period of the year for the consta-

* "Seven Deadly Sins of London." Quarto, 1606, p. 35.

bles to search out women of ill fame, and to confine them during Lent, while a still more degenerate class were carted. Evidences of both these habits may be gathered from the following passages. SENSUALITY says in *Microcosmos* (Act 5) —"But now welcome a cart, or a Shrove Tuesday's Tragedy." Again, in Nabbes' comedy, called TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, quarto, London, 1638, p. 6—"If I doe, I have lesse mercy than prentices at Shrove tide." Still more striking is a passage in a *Satyre against Separatists*, quarto, London, 1765; and other passages there are, but somewhat too coarse for the delicacy of modern ears, when vice may be tolerated, but must not be named, and we shall therefore content ourselves with merely referring to them for the gratification of the curious.—Second Part of the "Honest Whore," quarto, London, 1630. L. 6. et seq.

As to the *carting* part of the story in the first of the above extracts, though it has been overlooked by Brand and his commentator, to ride in a cart was from very remote times reckoned ignominious; thus, in the old romance of Launcelot de Lac, we are told "en ce temps la estoit accoutumée que *Charette* estoit si vil que nul' n'estoit dedans qui tout loz et tout honneur n'eust perdu; et quant s'invouloit a aucun tollir honneur si le faisoit s'en monter en un charette; car charette servit en ce temps la de ceque pilloris servent orendroit; ne en chascune bonne ville n'en avoit, en ce temps la, que une" —in those days it was the custom to consider the cart so base, that no one could be in it without losing all fame and all honour; and when it was wished to deprive any one of his reputation, he was made to mount in a cart; for the cart served at that time for what pillories serve now; nor in those days in each good town was there more than one.

Another amusement, if amusement it can be called,

and which prevailed both in court and country, was the tying of a cock to a stake, and flinging sticks at the poor bird till it was beaten to death. If well trained it would often elude for a long time the missiles of its persecutors, thereby earning a considerable sum of money for its master; and, when killed, it was put into a hat, and won a second time by the person, who could strike it out. Erasmus accounts for this cruel folly by observing in an ironical tone that the English eat on Shrove Tuesday "quoddam placentæ genus," a certain kind of cake—meaning thereby *pancakes*—"quo comesto protinus insaniunt et gallos trucidant;" which being devoured they immediately run mad, and kill the cocks.

This brutal custom has been variously derived. Some assert that it originated in an old story of the discovery of an adulterous amour by the crowing of a cock, which we need hardly say is utter nonsense; others have thought that the cock was thus made to suffer, in punishment for Saint Peter's crime in denying his master, which is no less ridiculous, although we have Sir Charles Sedley's authority for it in the following epigram;

> "May'st thou be punished for Saint Peter's crime,
> And on Shrove Tuesday perish in thy prime."

A writer in the Gentleman's Magazine for July 1783, tells us that he had somewhere heard or read of its being an allusion to the indignities offered to Christ by the Jews before his crucifixion. Cranenstein relates an idle story how "when the Danes were masters of England, and lorded it over the natives of the island, the inhabitants of a certain great city, grown weary of their slavery, had formed a secret conspiracy to murder their masters in one bloody night; and twelve men had undertaken to enter the town-house by a stratagem, and seizing the arms surprize the guard, which kept it; and at which time their fellows upon a signal given were to

come out of their houses and murder all opposers; but when they were putting it in execution, the unusual crowing and fluttering of the cocks about the place they attempted to enter at, discovered their design, upon which the Danes became so enraged that they doubled their cruelty and used them with more severity than ever. Soon after they were freed from the Danish yoke, and to revenge themselves on the cocks for the misfortune they had involved them in, they instituted this custom of knocking them on the head on Shrove Tuesday, the day on which it happened. This sport, though at first only practiced in one city, in process of time became a national divertisement, and has continued ever since the Danes first lost this island."

Were it worth while to refute this absurd version of the geese that by their cackling saved Rome, it might be replied that the Danes never did lose the island, but kept a fast hold of the prey they had once clutched. But the story, like the others before quoted, is sheer nonsense, although they are one and all gravely narrated by Brand, and passed over by Sir Henry Ellis without a comment.

On such occasions it is much better to confess our ignorance than to encrease the mass of error by idle conjectures and yet more idle endeavours to enforce them by a display of reading that leaves the question just where it was. Indeed after all that has been said upon the subject it seems more than probable that it originated in the same passion for brutal amusement, that gave rise to bear-baiting, bull-baiting, and so many sports of the same nature. It should be observed too that the practice was not confined to cocks alone, but extended itself to hens and doves, though this was by no means so general.

Another amusement of the season was what the people

called *threshing the fat hen*, which is thus explained in *Tusser Redivivus*. "The hen is hung at a fellow's back, who has also some horse-bells about him; the rest of the fellows are blind-folded, and have boughs in their hands, with which they chase this fellow and his hen about some large court or small enclosure. The fellow with his hen and bells shifting as well as he can, they follow the sound, and sometimes hit him and his hen; other times, if he can get behind one of them, they thresh one another well favouredly; but the jest is, the maids are to blind the fellows, which they do with their aprons, and the cunning baggages will indulge their sweet hearts with a peeping hole, while the others look out as sharp to hinder it. After this the hen is boiled with bacon, and store of pancakes and fritters are (is) made. She, that is noted for lying a-bed long or any other miscarriage, hath the first pan-cake presented to her, which most commonly falls to the dog's share at last, for no one will own it their due."

Other sports of a less brutal nature characterized this day. The game of football was at one time common not only among the London apprentices but in all the Northern counties of England. We are told that even so lately as the end of the eighteenth century the town-waits used to go playing to Alnwick Castle every Shrove Tuesday at two o'clock, p. m. when a football was thrown over the castle-wall for the amusement of the populace. At Chester also the same sport must have once prevailed, for King in his *Vale Royal of England* (p. 194) says that at the city of Chester in the year 1533 "the offerings of ball and foot-ball were put down, and the silver bell offered to the maior on Shrove Tuesday."

In Cumberland there was a custom, according to Hutchinson, which we do not remember to have heard of as occurring elsewhere. He says in his history of

that country. "Till within the last twenty or thirty years it had been a custom, time out of mind, for the scholars of the free school of Bromfield about the beginning of Lent, or, in the more expressive phraseology of the country, at Fasting's Even, to bar out the master, i. e. to depose and exclude him from his school, and keep him out for three days. During the period of this expulsion, the doors of the citadel, the school, were strongly barricadoed within; and the boys, who defended it like a beseiged city, were armed in general with *bore-tree*, or elder pop-guns. The master meanwhile made various efforts, both by force and stratagem to regain his lost authority. If he succeeded, heavy tasks were imposed, and the business of the school was resumed and submitted to; but it more commonly happened that he was repulsed and defeated. After three days' siege, terms of capitulation were proposed by the master and accepted by the boys. These terms were summed up in an old formula of Latin Leonine verses stipulating what hours and times should for the year ensuing be allotted to study, and what to relaxation and play. Securities were provided by each side for the due performance of these stipulations, and the paper was then solemnly signed both by master and scholars. The whole was concluded by a festivity, and a treat of cakes and ale furnished by the scholars.

"One of the articles, always stipulated for and granted, was the privilege of immediately celebrating certain games of long standing, viz.: foot-ball match and a cock-fight. Captains, as they were called, were then chosen to manage and preside over these games; one from that part of the parish which lay to the westward of the school; the other from the east. Cocks and foot-ball players were sought for with great diligence. The party, whose cocks won the most battles, was held as

victorious in the cock-pit; and the prize, a small silver bell, suspended to the button of the victor's hat, and worn for three successive Sundays. After the cock-fight was ended, the foot-ball was thrown down in the church-yard; and the point, then to be contested, was which party could carry it to the house of his respective captain—to Dundraw perhaps, or West-Newton, a distance of two or three miles, every inch of which ground was keenly disputed. All the honour accruing to the conqueror at foot-ball was that of possessing the ball. Details of these matches were the general topics of conversation among the villagers; and were dwelt on with hardly less satisfaction than their ancestors enjoyed in relating their feats in the border wars."

Before quitting this part of our subject it may be as well to add that the brutal custom of cock-fighting originated with the polished Athenians. Ælian tells us in his *Various History* that the Athenians ordained cock-fighting should take place once a year in the public theatre, and he thus gives the origin of the custom: When Themistocles was leading the Greek forces against the Persians, he observed two game-cocks fighting by the way, whereupon he brought the whole army to a halt and addressed them, saying, "these birds are thus perilling themselves, not for their country, nor for their Gods, nor for their ancestral heroes, nor for their children, but merely because neither will allow the superiority of the other."* This pithy speech and example confirmed the courage of his soldiers, and he wished therefore that the thing should be held in perpetual remembrance. However we may feel disposed to doubt this pretty fable as to the actual origin of the custom, it is yet a sufficient testimony that it did at one time exist.

But the peculiar feature of Shrove Tuesday was the

* Æliani Var. Hist. Lib. II—Cap. xxviii.

frying and eating of pancakes, a practice which Brand would fain derive from a kind of pancake feast that was used in the Greek Church just before Lent. How we were likely to have got it from such a quarter he does no attempt to explain, and the thing seems not a little improbable. It would appear much more likely that this, as well as the other cakes used on the feasts and particular days of the year, was borrowed from a similar sort of offering amongst the Pagans, or else from the shew-bread of the Jews. Why the cake should be made in a pan, rather than baked in the usual way, is a mystery that we do not pretend to unravel.

We have already alluded to the old custom of ringing in people to confession on Shrove-tide morning. When the Reformers abolished so much of the antient Roman Catholic rites they found themselves in the same difficulty as the early Christians, who, upon their faith becoming predominant over heathenism, were yet unable to altogether eradicate the old Pagan customs; in this case therefore, as in so many others, they imitated their Roman Catholic predecessors and what they could not entirely get rid of they converted as far as possible to their own purposes. Thus the bell continued to peal as it had been used, but to call people to pancake-eating instead of to confession, an instance of which we have at Newcastle-upon-Tyne where the great bell of Saint Nicholas' church is tolled at twelve o'clock at noon, when the shops are immediately shut up, offices closed, and all kinds of business cease, a little carneval ensuing for the rest of the day. In Leicestershire also, as we learn from Macauley's History and Antiquities of Claybrook, "a bell rings at noon, which is meant as a signal for the people to begin frying their pancakes." In York too they have a similar custom, as appears from a curious old tract, entitled, *A Vindication of the Letter*

out of the North concerning Bishop Lake's Declaration, &c., wherein the author says "they have for a long time at York had a custom—which now challenges the privilege of a prescription — that all the apprentices, journeymen, and other servants of the town, had the liberty to go into the cathedral, and ring the Pancake-Bell, as we call it in the country, on Shrove Tuesday: and that being a time that a great many came out of the country to see the city (if not their friends) and church, to oblige the ordinary people the minster used to be left open that day to let them go up to see the lanthorn and bells, which were sure to be pretty well exercised, and was thought a more innocent divertisement than being at the ale-house. But Doctor Lake when he came first to reside there, was very much scandalized at this custom, and was resolved he would break it at first dash, although all his brethren of the clergy did dissuade him from it. He was resolved to make the experiment, for which he had like to have paid very dear, for I'le assure you it was very near costing him his life. However he did make such a combustion and mutiny, that I dare say York never remembered, nor saw the like, as many yet living can testify."

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, puts an end for a time to these wild doings, substituting as absurd a fast, in imitation of our Saviour's miraculous abstinence for forty days. Originally the fast commenced on that which is now the first Sunday in Lent, and ended on Easter Day, but as this left only thirty-six days when the Sundays were deducted (upon the principle that no Sunday can ever be a fast-day,) Pope Gregory added four days from the previous week, beginning with Ash Wsdnesday. The name of Ash Wednesday was derived from the ancient ceremony of blessing ashes at this season, with which the priest signed the

people on the forehead in the form of a cross, affording them withal this wholesome admonition, "Memento, homo, quòd pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris,"—remember, O man, that thou art dust, and to dust shalt return.—The ashes thus used were made of the palms consecrated the Sunday twelvemonth before, and this ceremony, though in a modified form, survived the first shock of the Reformation, not being abandoned till about the year 1547-8, when, as Stow tells us, "the Wednesday following, commonly called Ash-Wednesday, the use of giving ashes in the church was also left throughout the whole citie of London." Prior to that time it had formed one of the ordinances of the Reformed Church.

At one period, after this solemn service the people used to renew some of their carneval fooleries, amongst which throwing at the *Jack-a-Lent*, as they had previously done at the Shrove-tide cock, was one of the principal. This *Jack-a-Lent* was a puppet, and was likely enough to have been a substitute for the older custom of pelting the Jews with stones, which had at one time prevailed to mark the popular abhorence of their share in the crucifixion. As to the practice itself, our old dramatists abound in allusions to it, but it stands in no need of explanation. The fast obtained its name of *lent* from the season of the year, in which it was celebrated, *lent*, or *lenten*, in the old Saxon signifying "spring," the time when the days began to *lengthen*—lengthen-tide—which word has been corrupted into *lenten*, and *lent*.

Using the poet's privilege of ending tragedy with a comic epilogue, I shall now conclude this account of February with Taylor's humorous derivation of the word *Lent;* it is in a style that must have delighted Dean Swift had it ever come under his notice. "Now for

the name and beginning of Lent," he says, "the word *Lent* doth signify a thing borrowed, for except a thing be borrowed how is it *lent?* and being lent, it follows by consequence that it was borrowed. But from whom it was so free of the loan of this *Lent*, that would be known.

"First then you must conceive that the true etimology, or ancient name of this *Lent* is *Tantide*, which being anagrammatized is *Landit*, for the chief provision that he is furnished withal being fish, and such sea-faring fare, that except he land it, there will be but cold takings in the fish-markets, for Jack-a-Lent hath no society, affinity, or propinquity with flesh and blood, and by reason of his leanness—as Nymshay, an ancient Utopian philosopher, declares in his treatise of the Antiquity of ginger-bread, (Lib. 7. Pag. 30,000) he should have been a footman."

This grave banter fully equals the Dean's derivation of Alexander the Great from all-eggs under the grate, for which, according to him, the world's conqueror had a singular predilection.*

* "Alexander the Great was very fond of eggs roasted in hot ashes. As soon as his cooks heard he was come home to dinner or supper, they called aloud to their under-officers,—*all eggs under the grate*, which repeated every day at noon and evening, made strangers think it was his real name, and therefore gave him no other, and posterity has been ever since under the same delusion."—*Swift's Works*, vol. xiv.

Nothing came amiss to Swift in the way of a joke, however coarse or foolish; but it must be owned that the etymologists are often quite as ridiculous in earnest, as he is here in jest.

BLOOD BATHS.

IN THE EARLY AND MIDDLE AGES.

A BELIEF in the cleansing and purifying virtues of human blood, but more especially in regard to lepers, appears to have existed in the remotest times. That it prevailed amongst the Egyptians we know from Pliny, and the idea was evidently borrowed from them by Moses, although it became modified in his code, the blood of animals being substituted for that of human beings. The passage in the Roman naturalist is not only conclusive on this point, but it contains some curious matters in regard to the leprosy, which may make it worth while recalling it to the reader's recollection:

"Diximus elephantiasin ante Pompeii Magni ætatem non accidisse in Italiam, et ipsam a facie sæpius incipientem in nare primum veluti lenticula; mox increscente per totum corpus, maculosa, variis coloribus, et inæquali cute, alibi crassâ, alibi tenui, durâ alibi, ceu scabie asperâ; ad postremum vero nigrescente, et ad ossa carnes opprimente, intumescentibus digitis in pedibus manibusque. Ægypti peculiare hoc malum; et quum in reges incidisset, populis funebre. *Quippe in balineis solia*

temperebantur humano sanguine ad medicinam." * It is thus quaintly rendered by old Philemon Holland.

" As touching the white leprosie, called Elephantiasis, (according as I have before shewed) it was not seen in Italie before the time of Pompey the Great. This disease also began for the most part in the face; and namely it tooke the nose first, where it put forth a little specke or pimple no bigger than a small lentill; but soone after as it spread farther and ran over the whole bodie, a man should perceive the skin to be pointed and spotted with divers and sundrie colours, and the same uneven, bearing one higher in one place than another, thicke here but thin there, and hard everywhere, rough also like as if a scurfe or scab overran it, untill in the end it would grow to be blackish, bearing down the flesh flat to the bones, whiles the fingers of the handes and toes of the feet were puffed up and swelled againe. A peculiar malady is this and natural to the Egyptians; but looke when any of their kings fell into it, woe worth the subjects and poore people, '*for then were the tubs and bathing vessels, wherein they sate in the baine, (i.e.* bath) *filled with men's blood for their cure.*' "

But the remedial powers of human blood were not supposed to be confined to cases of leprosy alone; it was a medicine of universal application, a fancy which in all probability grew out of some vague notion that the vital principle resided in this fluid. " Sanguinis," says Pliny " ipsius hominis, ex quacumque emisso, efficacissime anginam illini tradunt Orpheus et Archelaus; item ora comitiali morbo lapsorum; exsurgere enim protinus. Quidam, si pollices pedum pungantur exque his guttæ referantur in faciem." †

" Orpheus and Archelaus both doe affirme that if the squinansy (i.e. quinsy) be anointed with man or woman's

* C. Plini Natur. Hist. Lib. xxviij. c. 5. † Id. Lib. xxviij. c. 10.

blood,—it skilleth not out of what veine or part of the bodie it issued—it is an excellent remedie for that disease. The like effect it hath, if their mouths be rubbed with the said blood, who being overtaken with the epilepsie, are falne downe, for immediately thereupon they will rise and stand upon their feet. Some write that if the great toes be pricked untill they bleed againe, the drops that come forth worke the like effect in the falling sicknesse, so that the face of the patient be sprinkled or besmeared therewith."

But the most singular part of the story, as it seems to us, is the fact that while the Jewish lawgiver imparted a sacrificial virtue to the blood of animals, the Romans should have adopted a belief the very reverse. According to the Pagan theory, as handed down to us by Pliny, the blood of horses is venomous, and that of bulls is no better, except at Ægira, a city of Achaia, though why this spot should be an exception to the general rule he does not inform us. Goat's blood also he denounces, and adds that it is so strong nothing in the world will sharpen the edge of an iron tool sooner, or harden it when keen, and that it will polish steel better than any file.

If however this diversity of opinion be a legitimate cause for wonder, we have still greater reason to be surprised at finding that the Christians in the middle ages adopted the Pagan rather than the Jewish belief. The Emperor Constantine, it is true, was restrained from using this revolting remedy in consequence of a vision, and is said to have been cured by baptism, but the use of the blood-bath seems to have been by far too common both in ancient times and in the middle ages. Amidst a mass of fables the germs of truth are sufficiently evident, and in the time of the great leprosy this belief must have given occasion to numberless cruelties, more especially

as children and maidens were the objects of it, a class the least likely to be able to escape from the sacrifice demanded of them. After a time however it received a check from an opinion gradually gaining ground that only the blood of those would be efficacious, who offered themselves freely and voluntarily for a beloved sufferer. The idea of quoting poetry in support of historical fact may to many seem ridiculous, but the ballads of ancient times are for the most part modelled upon the customs and feelings of the age in which they were written; they were songs *of* the people and *to* the people, the records of the world about them, and we feel no hesitation in adducing *Armer Heinrich** — Poor Henry — in proof of the popular notions of the period. It is one of the most beautiful poems of the thirteenth century, and in its simple and antique phraseology strongly reminds us of the old English ballads. The outlines of the story are nearly as follows. A Swabian knight, who possesses wealth, rank, and fame, all in short that can make life desirable, is on the sudden seized with leprosy. In order to escape the civil death, which was one of the terrible results of this disease, he roams through the world in the hope of somewhere finding a remedy, and Montpelier being in those days famous for its physicians, it is there that he first seeks assistance. They pronounce his case to be beyond their art, and he then repairs to Salerno, where he is made acquainted with the apparently hopeless means of cure— namely that he should bathe in the blood of some child, or of some virgin, who shall submit to be a willing sacrifice. Sad at heart, he returns home, with the conviction that such terms of cure leave him no hope, and he therefore prepares himself to sorrow out the remainder of his days in solitude. It is now that a girl

* Written by *Hartman Von der Aue.*

only twelve years old, the daughter of a countryman, conceives a passion for the knight while attending upon him, and accidentally hearing of this free-will offering determines to become his sacrifice. Henry, struck by the poor creature's attachment, at first refuses to avail himself of it, but her devotion is proof against all persuasions, and they set out together for Salerno.* The fatal catastrophe, however, is averted by the knight's recovery through other means, and in requital for so much love he gives his hand to the maiden in marriage.

The story of Amicus and Amelius is another fable of the same kind; and there is a similar tale related of Louis XI. having a mind to avoid his approaching death by drinking the blood of young children. This monarch's incessant and puerile dread of death is matter of history, and availing himself of this weakness, his physician, the notorious Jacques Cotier, or Coythier, kept the tyrant in

* Salerno, the ancient Salernum, was celebrated so early as the eighth century for its medical institution, which was established by the Benedictines. In those dark ages the cures were supposed to be chiefly effected by help of the holy reliques of Saint Matthew, who was the tutelar saint of their monastery, and who thus acquired the credit, which modern heresy would attribute to the healthy situation of the town, for it is sheltered by mountains behind, while it faced the sea towards the south. In addition to these advantages, the water is remarkable for purity, and the country around is rich in medicinal herbs and plants, of which the monks had no doubt a practical knowledge, though we can hardly allow them the possession of science. Hence it became a custom for invalides of wealth and rank to pilgrimage thither for the recovery of their health, the first we have on record being Adalberon, archbishop of Verdun, whose visit occurred in the year 984. In after times Salerno acquired yet greater celebrity from the concourse of crusaders, who found it a convenient resting-place in their journey to and from the East, and by degrees the practice of medicine assumed a more scientific form, though it was still darkened by a multitude of absurdities. Sprengel in his admirable work—*Versuch einer progmatischen Geschichte der Arzneykunde*—gives a history of this school and its professors.

subjection, getting from him enormous sums, besides causing him to amply provide for his friends and relations. "Je sais bien, lui dit il quelquefois, que vous m'envoyerez comme vous faites d'autres, mais—par un grand serment qu'il jurait—vous ne vivrez point huit jours apres."—"I know well," he would sometimes say, "that you will get rid of me as you have done of others, but——" and here he swore a solemn oath—"you will not live eight days afterwards." This incident, as the reader will probably well remember, has been transferred by Sir W. Scott, in Quentin Durward, to Martius Galeotti the astrologer to the same monarch, and who in fact has many other points of resemblance to Coythier.

The account given of the last hours of Louis XI. by the historian Gaguin bears sufficient testimony to the fact of the blood-drink, and though the historian has been justly reproached for his excessive credulity on many occasions, there seems to be no reason for doubting him here when all he asserts is so consonant to the prejudices of the age and the peculiar character of the monarch. As the whole scene is exceedingly curious in itself, as well as illustrative of our subject, we shall give a free version of a portion of it, which is in old French and the black letter.* "King Louis had no rest from his malady, and felt himself growing weaker and weaker every day, so that the fear of death encreased upon him, for no one was more desirous of life than he was. Nevertheless providing for his end he caused himself to be carried to Amboise, to which place having summoned his son, Charles, he said, My dear son, I am nearer to my end than you imagine; my disorder incessantly torments me, and no medicine affords any relief. You will reign after me, for the which you will find loyal servants the most essential. Amongst many whose faith and dili-

* GAGUIN—*Croniques de France.* Fueillet. ccij. Folio, 1516.

gence I have experienced I particularly recommend two men to you, that is to say, Oliver le Dain and Jean de Doyat, for of the services of Oliver I have had the greatest use; take him after me into your service, and allow none of the goods or offices he has acquired from me to be taken from him. Gui Pot* and Bouchage, you will esteem as prudent men and of good counsel. In regard to Philip D'Esquerdes, doubt not he is skilful in all military matters, and therefore, when the war breaks out, make use of his prudence and moderation. All the others that have dignity and offices from me, I wish that you should confirm and entertain them. Relieve as much as you can the people, whom I have ground down by the necessity of war. Do not trust to your mother, for being of Savoy she has always seemed to me to favour the Burgundians. Otherwise, that is to say as to the rest of her qualities, I have always esteemed her good and virtuous." After having spoken thus, Louis returned to Tours where, thinking to relieve his disorder by music, he ordered all manner of instrumentalists to be brought together, and it is said that they amounted to one hundred and twenty. Amongst them were shepherds, and they played for many days by the king's chamber, that he might not yield to the sleepiness which oppressed him.† But besides this class of people he summoned to him

* Guy Pot was the Baily of Vermandois, and D'Esquerdes was a soldier of distinguished conduct and valour.

† Pere Daniel in his "Histoire de France," (vol. vii. p. 640) tells us that in addition to these amusements, as the king could no longer go to the chase, of which he was passionately fond, they took the largest rats they could find and hunted them in his chamber with cats for his amusement. The same authority also relates the before-mentioned story of Cotier—whom he calls Coctier—terrifying the king into compliance with all his wishes by swearing that he would not outlive him eight days. But indeed, tyrant as Louis was by nature, he seems to have been kept in abject submission by this man, and his worthy coadjutors, Olivier le Dain and Jean Doiac, or Doyat.

others of a very different kind, men dwelling in solitudes and in hermitages, with those who were greatly in the renown of sanctity. Likewise there came to Tours women of excellent devotion, who were commanded to pray to Heaven incessantly, that it would restore health to the king and grant him longer life, so anxious was he not to quit this world. I imagine," says the historian, "he foresaw the troubles which the lust of rule would give rise to after his death."

Ambassadors now came to Louis from Flanders and Brabant, and his son Charles V. was betrothed to Marguerite, the daughter of Maximilian, but his disorder still grew upon him; and in this year, 1443, "imploring high and low the aid of God and man, he commanded that they should bring to Tours the sacred liquor, which it is said was sent from Heaven to anoint King Clovis in his city of Rheims,, Besides this he had from the holy chapel at Paris the rod of the high priest Aaron, which many affirm"—the historian himself is modest—"to have been divinely given to Charlemagne. But there was nothing that could put off the appointed hour. Every day he grew worse and worse, and the medicines profited him nothing, though of a strange character, for he vehemently hoped to recover by the *human blood which he drank and swallowed from certain children.* But he died at Tours"———which from the tone of the historian would seem a greater miracle than the idea of such a horrible mode of cure.

It may perhaps add little to our faith in the former use of the blood-bath that Klinger has employed it to heighten the horrors of his Faust; but when we find the learned Sprengel giving credit to it, in addition to what has been already said, it seems absurd to deny the existence of a custom the belief in which has been so universal.

MOON-MEN.

Much has been written of late years knowingly and unknowingly about the Gypsies; but, strange to say, Dekker's satirical account of them seems to have escaped observation, though the pamphlet from which the following extract is taken is far from being uncommon. Making every reasonable allowance for the exaggerations of a professed satirist,—and Dekker like Iago was "nothing if not cynical"—there seems to be no ground for doubting that his picture of the vices and follies of his age was in the main true. As such it is presented to the reader, with the omission only, or softening down, of a few phrases here and there, which were manifestly too coarse for the present taste.

"A *Moon-Man* signifies in English a *madman* because the moon hath greatest domination, above any other planet, over the bodies of frantic persons. But these *Moon-Men*, whose images are now to be carved, are neither absolutely mad nor yet perfectly in their wits. Their name they borrow from the moon, because the moon is never in one shape two nights together but wanders up and down Heaven like an antic, so these change-

able stuff companions never tarry one day in a place but are the only base runagates upon earth. And as in the moon there is a man, that never stirs without a bush of thorns at his back, so these Moon-Men lie under bushes, and are indeed no better than hedge-creepers. ' They are a people more scattered than Jews, and more hated, beggarly in apparel, barbarous in condition, and beastly in behaviour, and bloody if they meet advantage. A man, that sees them, would swear they had all the yellow jaundice; or that they were tawny Moors' bastards, for no red-oaker man carries a face of a more filthy complexion; yet are they not born so, neither hath the sun burnt them so, but they are painted so; yet they are not good painters neither, for they do not make faces, but mar faces. By a bye-name they are called Gypsies; they call themselves Egyptians; others in mockery call them *Moon-Men.* If they be Egyptian, sure I am they never descended from any of the tribes of those people that came out of the land of Egypt; Ptolemy, King of the Egyptians, I warrant, never called them his subjects, no nor Pharaoh before him. Look, what difference there is between a civil citizen of Dublin and a wild kerne, so much difference there is between one of these counterfeit Egyptians and a true English beggar. An English rogue is just of the same livery. They are commonly an army about fourscore strong, and they never march with all their bags and baggages together, but like boot-halers* they forage up and down countries, four, five, or six in a company. As the Switzer has his wench and his cock when he goes to the wars, so these vagabonds have their women, with a number of little

* A "Boot-haler" is *a robber*, or *plunderer*, and is so explained both by Cotgrave and in the Lexicon Tetraglotton. "BUTINEUR" says Cotgrave, "a *boot-haler*, *pillager*"—and in the Tetraglotton we have "BOOT-HALER, *Butineur*, *Predatore*.

children at their heeles, which young brood of beggars are sometimes carryed—like so many greene geese alive to a market in paires of paniers, or in dossers like fresh fish from Rye that comes on horse-back—if they be but infants, but if they can straddle once, then as well she-rogues as he-rogues are horst, seven or eight upon one jade, strongly pineoned and strangely tied together.

"One shire alone, and no more, is sure still at one time to have these Egyptian vermin"—*vermin* is not exactly Dekker's word—"swarming within it, for like flocks of wild geese they will evermore flye one after another; let them be scattered worse than the quarters of a traytor are after he's hanged, drawne, and quartered, yet they have a trick, like water cut with a sword, to come together instantly and easily againe; and this is their policie, which way soever the foremost ranks lead, they stick up small boughs in several places to every village where they passe, which serve as ensigns to wait on the rest.

"Their apparell is odd and fantastick, though it be never so full of rents. The men wear scarves of calico, or any other loose stuff, hanging [about] their bodies, like Morice dancers, with bells and other toys, to entice the country people to flock about them to wonder at their fooleries, or rather rank knaveries. The women as ridiculously attire themselves, and wear rags and patched filthy mantles uppermost when the undergarments are handsome and in fashion.

"The battles these outlaws make are many and very bloody. Whosoever falls into their hands never escapes alive, and so cruel they are in these murthers that nothing can satisfy them but the very heart-blood of those whom they kill. And who are they, think you, that thus go to the pot?—alas! innocent lambs, sheep, calves, pigs, &c. Poultry-ware are more churlishly handled by them

than poor prisoners are by keepers in the Counter in the Poultry. A goose coming amongst them learns to be wise, that he will never be goose any more. The bloody tragedies of all these are only acted by the women, who carrying long knives, or skeanes, under their mantles, do thus play their parts. The stage is some large heath or furze-bush common far from any houses, upon which, casting themselves into a ring, they enclose the murdered till the massacre be finished. If any passenger come by, and wondering to see such a conjuring circle kept by hell-hounds, and demand what spirits they raise there, one of the murderers steps to him, poisons him with sweet words, and shifts him off with this lie that one of the women are fallen in labour; but if any mad Hamlet, hearing this, smells villainy, and rush in by violence to see what the tawny divels are doing, then they excuse the fact, lay the blame upon those that are actors, and perhaps (if they see no remedy) deliver them to an officer to be had to punishment; but by the way a rescue is surely laid; and very valiantly, though very villainously, do they fetch them off and guard them.

"The cabins where these land-pirates lodge in the night are the outbarns of farmers and husbandmen, in some poor village or other, who dare not deny them for fear they should ere morning have their thatched houses burning about their ears; and these barns are both their cookrooms, their supping-parlours, and their bed-chambers, for there they dress after a beastly manner whatsoever they purchased* after a thievish fashion. Sometimes they eat venison and have greyhounds that kill it for them, but if they had not, they are hounds themselves and are damnable hunters after flesh.

"Upon days of pastime and liberty they spread them-

* "Purchased," i. e. *stole.*

selves in small companies amongst the villages, and when young maids and bachelors—yea sometimes old doting fools that should be beaten * to this world of villainies and forewarn others—do flock about them, they then profess skill in palmistry, and forsooth can tell fortunes, which for the most part are infallibly true, by reason that they work upon rules which are grounded upon certainty; for one of them will tell you that you shall shortly have some evil luck fall upon you, and within half an hour after you shall have your pocket picked, or your purse cut. These are those Egyptian grasshoppers that eat up the fruits of the earth and destroy the poor corn-fields. To sweep these swarms out of this kingdom there are no other means but the sharpness of the most infamous and basest kinds of punishment; for if the ugly body of this monster be suffered to grow and fatten itself with mischiefs and disorders, it will have a neck so sinewy and so brawny that the arm of the law will have much ado to strike off the head, sithence every day the members of it encrease, and it gathers new joints and new forces by priggers,† anglers,‡ cheaters,§ yeomen's daughters—that have taken some by-blows, and to avoid shame, fall into their sin—and other servants, both men and maids, that have been pilferers, with all the rest of that damned regiment, marching together in the first army of the *Belman*‖, who running away from their own

* "Beaten," i. e. *used, accustomed to.*

† Thieves. ‡ Pilferers, petty thieves. § Sharpers.

‖ An allusion to another pamphlet of Dekker's, called the "Belman of London," in which, to use his own phraseology, he "brings to light the most notorious villanies that are now practiced in the kingdom." Indeed he seems to have taken a strange pleasure in diving into every gutter and fishing up thence all the filth possible. This may certainly have proceeded from a high moral sense and it is charitable to believe so, yet I can hardly help suspecting that there was at least as much love of the subject as love of morality

colours, which are bad enough, serve under these, being the worst. Lucifer's launceprisades,* that stand aloof to behold the musterings of these hell-hounds, took delight to see them double their files so nimbly, but held it no policy to come near them; for the divell himself durst scarce have done that. Away therefore he gallops, knowing that at one time or other they would all come to fetch their pay where it was due."—*English Villanies, Eight Several Times Prest to Death by the Printers. Sig. E.* 3.

in the selection. One is tempted, moreover, to put the same question in his case, as well as in that of Juvenal, that Mrs. Frail put to her sister, when reproached with her bodkin having been found at the World's End, "Sister, sister, how came *you* to find it there?"

* *Launcepesado, Launcepresado,* or *Launceprisado,* is explained by Minshew to be "one that commands over ten soldiers, the lowest officer in a band of Footmen."

CROSSES.

The use of Crosses was exceedingly various in the olden time; hence no little confusion has arisen, and there appears to be some reason for concluding that they were not always of the same form or of the same material, but that these varied according to the purpose for which they were designed. They were often employed to mark the spot where any singular instance of God's mercy had been shown; and yet more frequently as a memorial of the traveller murdered by robbers, or of any one who had met with a violent death, and who, from his rank in life or the peculiar circumstances of the case, excited a more than usual interest. They were also erected where the corpse of any great personage had rested when being carried to the grave, for in those days the dead were prodigious travellers, and we often find them removing more than once or twice from what in their case would be erroneously called the final resting place. One object of these rests was that the bystanders and attendants might pray for the soul of the departed. Occasionally Crosses were erected in churchyards, to remind the people of the benefit vouchsafed tous by the Cross of our Saviour; and in yet earlier

times they were raised at most places of public concourse, or at the meeting of three or four highways. At these Crossesit was customary for mendicants to station themselves, and solicit charity for Christ's sake; whence they say in the north of England, when a person has been extremely urgent, " he begged like a cripple at a Cross." Penances were very commonly finished at Crosses; and as this was attended with weeping and the usual marks of contrition, they were commonly called *Weeping Crosses*. To this circumstance many allusions are made in our elder dramatists, the phrase generally assuming the form, that the person spoken of " would end at Weeping Cross," meaning of course that his conduct would end in vexation and repentance. Thus in the old comedy of EASTWARD HOE —" My daughter, his ladie, was sent Eastward by land to a castle of his i' the aire (in what region I know not), and, as I heare, was glad to take up her lodging in her coach, she and her two waiting women, her maide, and her mother, like three snailes in a shel, and the coachman a top on 'hem, I thinke. Since, they have all found the way backe againe by *Weeping Cross*."—*Eastward Hoe, Sig. F.* 3.

ALE-HOUSES.

IN THE OLDEN TIME.

On no subject is Dekker more vehement than the abuses of ale-houses; and to judge from his account, this crying evil of our own days existed to the same extent in the time of our forefathers. His satire is curious too from the hints of old customs scattered throughout it, and for which we should in vain seek for an explanation elsewhere. What follows is the most important part of a whole chapter upon this subject, and in his own words:—

"Not to meddle with the acts and statutes of all our former kings, what did King James, anno 1, against these exorbitants? It was then enacted, that whereas the ancient, true, and principall use of innes, ale-houses, and victualing houses, was for the receipt, reliefe, and lodging, of way-fayring people, to supply the wants of such as are not able by greater quantities to make their provisions of victualls, and not to harbour idle fellowes to consume their money and time in drunkennesse; it was therefore enacted that for every offence committed by any innekeeper, ale-house keeper, or victualer, they should forfeit ten shillings to the use of the poore. If these forfeits were truely paid, as they are truely made, the poore in some parish would be as merry as the rich.

"But now, for all this act, and for all the other statutes for the same purpose established since, how many parishes in England, how many in and about London, especially throughout all the suburbs, doe like ilands swim as it were in hot waters, strong beere, and headstrong ale! For to such a height is this sinne of drinking growne, that coblers, tinkers, pedlers, porters, all trades, all professions, sit tippling all day, all night, singing, dancing—when they can stand—laughing, cursing, swearing, fighting.

"A whole street is in some places but a continuous ale-house; not a shop to be seen between a red lattice and a red lattice;* no workers but all drinkers; not a tradesman at his occupation, for every tradesman keeps in that place an ale-house. It is an easier life, a lazier life, a trade more gainful; no such commings in as those of the tap, insomuch that in most of the suburbian outroads the best men there that command the reste—the Grand Signors of the parish, as constables, head-boroughs, and other officers—are common ale-house keepers; and he that can lay in most guyles† of beere, and be furnished

* That is, *between ale-house and ale-house*. Every reader of Shakspeare must recollect the way in which Falstaff's page describes the red nose of Bardolph.—"He called me even now, my Lord, through a *red lattice*, and I could see no part of his face from the window." The indefatigable Malone and Douce have multiplied instances of the use of lattices painted red in ale-houses, and hence it often came to signify the ale-house itself, from its being in a manner peculiar to them. The most explicit instance of this kind, that I remember to have met with, is in "The Christmas Ordinary," by W. R., a *Private Show*, as the author calls it, but in fact a sort of Masque.

"Where Red Lattice doth shine,
'Tis an outward sign
Good Ale is a Traffic within;'
It will drown your woe,
And thaw the old snow
That grows on a frosty chin." Scene 5.

† "Guyles"—i. e. *gills*.

with the strongest ale, and headiest liquors, carryes the bucklers away from all his fellowes.*

"Now because the fashion of downright blowes in the ignoble schoole of drinking is growne stale, wickedness has invented new sorts of weapons to bewitch men—that love such kind of play—to goe reeling to destruction. In some places they have little Jacks† tipt with silver, and hung with small silver bells—these are called the *Gyngle Boys*—to ring peales of drunkenness. In other places they have shallow brown bowles, which they call *Whiskins*. Then you have another brewing, call'd *Huff's Ale*, at which, because no man must have but a pot at a sitting and so begone, the restraint makes men more eager to come on, so that by this policie one may *huffe* it foure or five times a day.

"These quaffings hurt thousands, and undoe many poore men, who would all follow their labours, but now live in beggary; their wives—unlesse they tipple hard too, as for the most part they doe by their evill examples, —starving at home, and their ragged children begging abroad. Then in some places instead of full quarts they have jugs of a pint and a halfe, with long necks embroydered, with froth cans not a wine pint for a penny; demy-cans, of draughts‡ a piece; and a device of six earthen pipes, or hollow funnells, all into one, every funnell holding two spoonfulls." *English Villanies*, bl. l. *sig. J.* 3.

* It would appear from this allusion, as well as from so many others in the old dramatists, that in the fight with bucklers, the bucklers themselves were considered the prize of victory. Thus to "give up the bucklers" or to "lay down the bucklers," was to *yield*, as to "bear away the bucklers" was to win. Steevens in his notes on Shakspeare has accumulated a multitude of illustrative passages.

† *Jack*, or *Black Jacks*,—pitchers of leather so called.

‡ i. e. containing as much as would be taken off at an ordinary draught.

CUPID AND PSYCHE.

One of the most beautiful tales of classic romance is that of Cupid and Psyche as narrated in the "Golden Ass of Apuleius." It has been borrowed by romancers of all times and countries, though without ever having been improved, and may in a measure be said to be the foundation of half the fairy-tales. The prohibition of Cupid and the transgression of Psyche have suggested the serpentine vest of Madame D'Aulnoy, to say nothing of "Gracieuse and Percinet," which has evidently been derived from the same source. The whole story has also been beautifully versified by Marino in his poem, "L'Adone," as well as been imitated by Fontaine, and dramatized by Moliere; at least a dramatic piece upon that subject appears in his works, being the same that was celebrated with so much magnificence at Paris in 1670, and which according to some was the joint production of Moliere, Corneille, Quinault, and Lulli, though the last in all probability had no farther share in it than setting the words to music.

But this story has yet earlier imitators, or else it was itself borrowed from the East, for we find something very like it in the "Three Calenders" and in others of the Persian Tales. The romancers too laid hands upon a fable

so much in harmony with this taste, and have left us a striking resemblance to it in the old fabliaux of "Partenopex de Blois." That the reader, who is unacquainted with the original, may be enabled to judge for himself how far these several assertions are correct, I will now give an abridgment of it, retaining as far as may be the peculiar tone and colouring, though not the precise language of Apuleius.

There was a certain king in the West, who had three daughters, all remarkable for beauty, but the youngest excelled her sisters, as much as they excelled all other women. Such indeed was her loveliness that strangers came from the farthest lands but to look upon her, and having once beheld her incomparable beauty they worshipped and reverenced her with divine adorations according to the olden rites. Hence it happened that the temples of Venus fell into neglect; Paphos was deserted; no worshippers visited Cithera; whereupon the goddess grew indignant, and, resolving to be revenged, she called her son, Cupid, and having shown him where Psyche dwelt,—for so was the maiden called—she passionately entreated him that he would cause her to fall in love with the most wretched object possible.

While Venus was thus plotting with her son, poor Psyche, honoured as she was on all hands, yet reaped very little advantage from her beauty. Her two sisters had been long wedded to kings, while no one, noble or ignoble, offered to marry herself, but all were content rather to admire her as they might have admired a beautiful statue. The maiden was disconsolate; her father was no less so, and suspecting that some of the Gods were as usual at the bottom of this mischief, he resolved to consult the oracle of Apollo at Miletus. The customary sacrifices being paid, the God, although he was an Ionian, because of the Milesian founder, did yet think proper to

reply in Latin, the substance of his answer being that "Psyche should be placed in mourning weeds upon the top of a high rock, for she must not expect a mortal husband, but a cruel serpent, who flew on wings above the skies, and was the terror of the Gods themselves." Infinite was the grief of the king at this oracle, but as there seemed to be no help for it, he was obliged to submit, and in this he was farthermore encouraged by Psyche herself; she was not a little curious to see her promised husband, besides that she felt flattered by the enmity of Venus, to whom she attributed this evil, since it was an acknowledgment of her superior beauty. In this frame of mind she was carried to the appointed rock, and there left alone to meet her destiny. And now was seen wonder; the breezes began to blow gently about her, and lifting her up as it were upon their wings they gently laid her down in the valley below amidst the flowers. Then sleep fell upon her, and when the maiden again awoke it was with a calm and placid mind, and she found that she was sweetly couched in the midst of a pleasant grove, through which ran a stream as clear as crystal. At the farther end, by the fall of the river, was a princely edifice, not builded by the hands of man, but fashioned by divine art. You would judge at the first entry therein that it was the dwelling of some God, for the roof was of citron-wood and ivory supported by pillars of gold, the walls were cased in silver, and the pavement was composed of precious stones, forming various pictures, so that blessed, and thrice blessed, were they who might tread upon such a floor. Yea, all around was as bright as day from the glittering of fiery gems that shot forth a splendour equal to that of the sun when he is at the highest.

Captivated by a scene so brilliant, Psyche did not long hesitate to enter, and her admiration encreased with every moment, when suddenly a gentle voice was heard, saying,

—"Why, O maiden, do you marvel at these riches? they are all thine; wherefore, go you into yon chamber, and repose yourself on the couch, and demand what bath you desire. We, whose voices you hear, are your servants, ready to minister to your wishes, and when you have recovered from your fatigue a regal feast is prepared for you."

Psyche did as the voice said to her, and having bathed and refreshed herself she sate down to a banquet, which was brought in by no hands, but wafted as it were by the wind. Then came the sound of music, but though it seemed as if multitudes played and sang, yet still she saw no one. So too, with the lover who has prepared all these delights for her gratification; unseen he woos and weds her, and at the dawn of day he again departs without her having once looked upon her new husband.

And thus it happened for a long time. Custom, as is usual, recommended novelty, and the sound of that sweet invisible voice was the delight of her solitude. In the meantime her parents grew old in sorrow; and the fame of her abduction, spreading far and wide, came at length to the ears of her sisters, who hereupon left their own homes that they might console and comfort their parents.

The same night Psyche's invisible husband thus addressed her—"My best and dearest wife, a great danger threatens you whereof I earnestly warn you to beware. Know that your sisters, grieving for your loss and tracking your footsteps, have now come to the mountain; but if you should hear their lamentations, take heed you neither answer nor show yourself to them, for if you do, you will cause infinite grief to me, and destruction to yourself."

Psyche promised obedience to the hests of her lord and husband, but when he had again departed from her at the break of morning, she began to weary of her solitude and

to lament that she might not see, and converse with, her dear sisters. So great was her trouble that she neither ate, nor drank, nor entered into the bath, but wept bitterly throughout the live-long day, till the hour arrived for her to go to bed. Then came her husband, and finding her in tears, he tenderly reproached her, saying, "Is it thus you keep your promise, my dear Psyche? Go to then; do as you list; obey the impulse that is leading you to destruction, but when it is too late remember you of my words." But Psyche would not be persuaded, and ceased not from her entreaties till she had wrung from him permission to see her sisters. Unwillingly as he yielded this consent, his reluctance it was plain proceeded but from excess of love, for at the same time he permitted her to lavish whatever she pleased of gold and jewels upon her sisters, only cautioning her not to be led by their evil counsels into the attempt to see his form;* if she failed in her obedience as to this, great misfortune would fall upon her, and she would lose him for ever. Psyche, as

* It is not a little singular that the same idea should pervade so many of the German elf-stories. Thus we find that Hinzelman, the Puck of our Teutonic neighbours, had always a particular aversion to being seen, and this forms the basis of several tales; but one will be sufficient to show the nature of the humorous goblin—A cook who was on terms of great intimacy with him, thought that she might venture to make a request of him, though another might not, and as she felt a strong desire to see Hinzelman bodily whom she heard talking every day, and whom she supplied with meat and drink, she prayed him earnestly to grant her that favour; but he would not, and said that this was not the right time, but that when it was proper he would let himself be seen by any person. This refusal only stimulated her curiosity, and she pressed him more and more to grant her request. He said she would repent if she would not give up her importunity; and when all his representations were to no purpose, he at last said to her, "come to-morrow morning before sunrise into the cellar, and carry in each hand a pail full of water, and your request shall be complied with." The maid enquired what the water was for. "That

before, was ready enough with her promises, protesting that she would rather undergo a thousand deaths than forfeit his affection, and beseeching as a farther boon that he would allow Zephyrus to fetch her sisters from the mountain into the valley. To this also the enamoured husband assented, and with morning went away as usual.

The sisters had now arrived at the summit of the rock, and finding it impossible to go any farther began afresh to lament for Psyche as one who was for ever lost to them, when suddenly she appeared in the valley below and wishing them to be of good cheer, bade Zephyrus waft them gently down to her. Hereupon the West Wind took them upon his wings and laid them beside her on the green-sward.

you will learn," answered he; "without it the sight of me might be injurious to you."

Next morning the cook was ready at peep of dawn, took in each hand a pail of water, and went down to the cellar. She looked about her without seeing any thing; but as she cast her eyes on the ground she perceived a tray on which was lying a naked child apparently three years old, and two knives sticking crosswise in his heart, and his whole body streaming with blood. The maid was terrified at this sight to such a degree that she lost her senses and fell in a faint on the ground. The spirit immediately took the water that she had brought with her, and poured it all over her head, by which means she came to herself again. She looked about for the tray, but all had vanished, and she only heard the voice of Hinzelman, who said, "you see now how needful the water was; if it had not been at hand, you had died here in the cellar. I hope your burning desire to see me is now pretty well cooled."

In the same way the beautiful fairy PREUSSINE (Histoire de Melusine, tirée des Chroniques de Poitou, Paris 1698. Dobenek,) stipulates with her husband that he shall never visit her in her lyings-in, and when he fails in this condition flies from him with her three daughters. So too, Melusine, when giving her hand to Count Raymond, bargains that he shall never desire to see her on a Saturday, and a similar infraction of the word plighted brings with it a similar punishment.

It is needless to relate the joy that followed, or the admiration of the sisters at all the treasures shown to them by the gratified Psyche. When however they had grown weary of wondering, and had moreover satisfied themselves at a princely banquet, they began with female curiosity to enquire about her husband. But Psyche, mindful of his admonitions, pretended that he was a handsome young man, with light hair, who was much addicted to sport amongst the mountains, and, that she might not be caught tripping, turned the discourse by filling their laps with gold and jewels, and again dismissed them on the wings of Zephyrus.

No sooner were the sisters safely landed upon the rock than they began to give vent to the envy that filled their bosoms. "Saw you not," said one, "what was in the house? what gold! what jewels! if her husband be as handsome as she affirms, there is no happiness on earth that can compare to hers; he may be a god and perhaps make a goddess of her, as already she is served by voices, and commands the winds." To this the other assented, and, taking counsel together, they agreed to destroy her if possible,* but in the meanwhile to conceal from their parents the story of her good fortune.

It would be long to relate how, when months had passed, her unseen husband again in the most pathetic terms warned Psyche against her envious sisters, saying that they would never rest till they had caused her to break her vow, but that when she had once looked upon his face, she would never see it again. With tears and sad forebodings he departed in the morning, and scarcely had he gone than the unwelcome guests making their appear-

* Here again it is easy to to detect a family likeness to the story of the envious sisters in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, which has re-appeared with little variation in "Cherry and Fire-Star," and is also to be found in the Gesta Romanorum.

ance they were welcomed as usual by the innocent Psyche. Then fell the conversation upon her husband, and, forgetful of the tale she had told before, she now said that he was a merchant, of a middle age, who was forced by his business to be absent. Upon this the sisters, perceiving how she had deceived them, pretended that in their great regard for her they had sought about and discovered her husband was a serpent, who only waited for the time of her delivery to devour both her and her infant; in confirmation of which they reminded her of the oracle. Poor Psyche was moved by their words, and confessed that she had never seen her husband, who, as he always kept himself invisible, was likely enough to be a monster. This was precisely what they wanted to know, and having got to the bottom of the mystery they now advised her that she should put a knife under her pillow, hide a lamp behind the hangings, and when her husband was fast asleep creep out of bed on bare feet and cut off his head. With this treacherous counsel they took themselves off as quickly as possible, lest they should be detected and punished, and Psyche being left to herself was tormented by a thousand doubts. One moment she will, the next she will not; now mistrust has the mastery, and then again love and confidence possess her. As usual the worser motive prevails; her husband sleeps; she arms herself with the knife, and taking up the lamp approaches the bed, when, O wonder!—before her lay Cupid, the God of Love, in the light of whose wondrous beauty the flame itself grew brighter and the steel received a keener edge. Overwhelmed with a sweet terror, she sought to hide the knife—even in her own bosom—but it dropt from her hand and she fell upon her knees. With what awe, and love, and admiration, did she gaze upon the sleeper! And well she might, for his golden locks poured forth ambrosia, and hung down

in waving ringlets about his rosy cheeks and snowy neck; the dewy pinions upon his shoulders were white like some shining flower, and although the wings were still the soft plumage at their ends shook tremulously with an amorous motion; the rest of his form was exquisitely fair and delicate, and such as Venus herself could not shame to have brought forth. At the foot of the bed lay his bows and quiver, and the natural curiosity of her sex being now fully awakened Psyche fell to examining the arrows, when, as she tried the point of one upon her trembling finger, it pierced the flesh so that the blood began to flow. Hereupon the weapon produced its wonted effect; her love, great as it had been before, was now yet more inflamed; she gazed on him tenderly, but while her heart beat and her hand trembled, there fell from the lamp a drop of burning oil on his left shoulder and he awoke. Filled with wrath at her transgression he would have fled in silence, but she caught hold of his foot and was borne aloft with him to the clouds, when, from fright and weariness, she again dropped to earth, and the god alighting on a near cypress tree, thus addressed her: "Oh, foolish Psyche, have I not for thee forgotten the hests of my mother Venus, and would you in requital of so much love take away my life? But thy faithless counsellors shall dearly abye their machinations. As for thee, thy punishment will be great enough in that I now abandon thee for ever."

Stretched upon the earth Psyche followed him with her eyes so long as he was still in sight; but when she could no longer see him, despair possessed her, and she flung herself into the next river. The gentle stream, however, that loved and feared the god who burns up even water, refused to let her sink, and cast her back again upon the shore. Then Pan, who was sitting close by, teaching the goddess Syrinx the sweetest melodies, or, in yet plainer

language, playing upon pipes formed of reeds, attempted to comfort her, recommending that she should leave off weeping, and rather try to soften Cupid by prayers and service. To this advice Psyche made no answer but by a silent adoration of his divinity, and then pursued her wandering course, till chance brought her to the city where one of her sisters dwelt. There she related what had happened, and, in the hope of punishing her cruelty, with seeming regret added that Cupid in abandoning her had declared he would marry her sister; at which the envious one betook herself to the rock, and, calling upon the Zephyr, sprang from it in the full hope that he would as usual bear her upon his wings into the valley. But the wind heard her not; and she fell below, crushed and mangled, and her body was devoured by the beasts of prey and the wild birds of the air. In the same way perished the other sister.

In the meantime, while Psyche went on searching for Cupid, he was lying grievously wounded on his mother's bed. Then the white sea-gull, who is always much given to chattering, must needs fly off to Venus, who was bathing in the bosom of the waters, and, having found her, begins to gossip of all that had happened, relating how Cupid had been grievously wounded, and that people began to speak ill of herself and her family; "they say," adds the gull, "that your son keeps bad company in the mountains, while you are revelling and rioting with old Ocean, whereby marriage has become a bed of discord, and love has grown out of fashion." The goddess, stung by these insinuations, demanded who it was that had dared to bewitch her son; and, being informed that it was Psyche, flew off in a violent rage to the chamber of poor Cupid, whom she loaded with reproaches, threatening to clip his wings for him and take away his bow and arrows. Not a word could the little offender say for himself, but hid his head under the bed-clothes; and Venus, having

scolded till she was tired, dashed out of the room, when haply she met Juno and Ceres, who, upon learning from her the cause of all this tumult, sought to put in a good word for Cupid; the fact is, they were both afraid of the urchin, having had some experience of his shafts, and hoped by these means to conciliate him for the future. Venus, however, was much too angry to listen to reason, and set out in quest of Psyche, with the full determination of punishing her to the utmost; but not succeeding in her search, she flew off to Jupiter to beg the use of herald Mercury for the nonce. This being granted, she ordered Hermes to proclaim far and wide, that whoever discovered Psyche and brought her to Venus—

> "Shall to-night receive a kiss
> How or where himself would wish."

Upon which promise all the world was in motion, kisses from a goddess not being a thing of every day occurrence. And what was the poor fugitive doing all the time? she was wandering from place to place, till at length she espied a temple on the brow of a mountain, and thinking that perhaps her lord might dwell there she climbed the steep and entered it, when she found shocks of wheat and barley and various implements of husbandry, but all lying about in the utmost confusion. Then thought Psyche to herself that she would win the favour of the deity, to whom the temple belonged, by putting every thing in order; and while she was thus employed Ceres made her appearance. The goddess, as may be imagined, was greatly pleased at this devotion, but she had the fear of Venus before her eyes, and told Psyche how she had lately entered into a treaty of peace and amity with the Cyprian queen, and therefore could not allow her to find sanctuary in the temple. So the poor wanderer resumed her sorrowful journey, and went on till she came in sight of a second fane, much richer and more glorious than the first, which

44885

she found was dedicated to the goddess Juno, to whom she immediately knelt and prayed for aid. But Juno also had her own reasons for not offending Venus, though she hid them under the pretext of love for so near a relation, and of exceeding respect for the law that forbade her harbouring the servant of another deity; wherefore she begged to be excused, and requested the suppliant would go about her business.

Thus repulsed on all sides, Psyche went straight to the house of Venus, when she was seized by an old servant, hight Custom, and dragged before her enraged mistress, who, to say the truth, quite forgot the goddess in her wrath, and railed like any kitchen wench.—"Ha, ha!" quoth she, laughing bitterly, and shaking her head after the manner of angry folks—"you have at last condescended to visit your mother-in-law?—or, perhaps, you have come to look after your husband? Set your heart at rest; I will receive you like a true stepmother. What, ho there!—where are my servants, Anxiety and Sorrow? let them take this creature and scourge her soundly." Accordingly they took her away and treated her despiteously; yet still Venus was not satisfied, but flew upon her like a tigress, tearing her hair and clothes and beating her, protesting all the time that the marriage was illegal, that she had no mind to be a grandmother at her years, and that her son was unworthy of the name. When at length she was weary of this amusement, she bethought herself of a better mode of punishment, and said, "the truth is, you are so abominably ugly that you can only hope to gain favour by being useful; wherefore you must separate the wheat, barley, millet, and vetches, that are mingled in yonder heap, each from the other, arranging them in several piles, and that before night-fall."

Psyche was now left alone; feeling however that to

accomplish such a task was impossible, she did not make the attempt, but folded her arms and sate down in silent despair. Then came forth the little Emmet, and pitying her sad estate, he called to him all the ants of the land, and in an eloquent speech informed them who Psyche was, and how cruelly she had been treated. More independent, or more compassionate, than Ceres or Juno, they listened to his words and agreed to do as he desired, wave after wave of the seven-footed race pouring in, and toiling hither and thither to divide the several sorts of grain and put them into proper order. Having accomplished this, they retired as swiftly as they had come.

Late at night Venus returned from the banquet, her hair dropping wine and odours, but seeing her orders fulfilled she was more wrath than ever, and by the morning had bethought herself of a new wile, that she thought full surely must destroy her victim. "Seest thou," she said, "yonder meadows bordered by the river, and the golden-fleeced sheep that feed there without any one to guard them? I desire that at all hazards you bring me a flock of that golden wool."

At this command Psyche arose and went her way, not to do as she had been bidden, but to find a rest from care and sorrow by throwing herself into the water. Then a green reed, the sweet nurse of music, became divinely inspired by the breath of the wind, and spoke to her from the river:—"O Psyche, I pray you pollute not my stream by your death, nor yet venture near those fearful sheep, for so long as the sun shines upon them their nature is fierce to madness, and they butt at all who approach with sharp horns and foreheads as hard as iron. Hide therefore by me under this green plane-tree till the heat of the day is over, and they have refreshed themselves in the water, when their wildness will be abated, and you may

safely gather the wool that they have left hanging upon the briers."

And Psyche did as the friendly reed advised, and brought back a quantity of the golden fleece to Venus, who, however, was as far from being satisfied as before. Convinced that Psyche must have been somehow assisted by Cupid, although he was safely locked up in his chamber, she now said, "Seest thou yonder rock from which a black torrent is pouring down, that supplies the Stygian Lake? go thither, and fill me this crystal urn from the source of the waters."

Again Psyche left the presence of her hard task-mistress, sure at least of finding an end to all her miseries. Indeed nothing seemed more likely: before her stretched a hugé mass of steep ragged rocks, down which the waters rushed, and which it was madness to think of ascending, besides that the source was guarded by dragons, whose eyes never slept, while the waves roared and clamoured, —"away with thee! away! or thou art lost." Poor Psyche was too much terrified at this tremendous scene to lament her hard fate with tears any longer; she was well-nigh petrified. But just then came sailing by the bird of Jove, and remembering how he had been helped by Cupid in the affair of Ganymede, out of gratitude he thought to serve his bride; accordingly he came down, took the crystal cup from her, and, dexterously winging his flight between the dragons, contrived to fill it in spite of them.

Great was the surprise, and no less the wrath, of Venus when Psyche returned after having again successfully fulfilled her mission. "Truly," quoth she, "you must be a witch, who can obey such commands? But I tell you what, my child; you must now take this box, wend your way to the shades below, and beg Proserpine to send me enough of her beauty to last for a single day. Say

that all I had has been wasted away in grieving for my son's sickness; and mind you make haste back again, for I have to be at a meeting of the gods to-day."

Psyche now saw that it was all over with her; and, considering that if she was to go to the Infernal Regions, the shortest way thither would be, by throwing herself from a neighbouring tower, she prepared accordingly. But the tower suddenly found a tongue, and admonished her that if she went to Orcus by that road she would never come back again, it being contrary to Pluto's laws for the soul to travel unless in company with the body; "wherefore," said the friendly tower, "go to Lacedæmon, and seek out the hill Tænaros close by, where you will find a cavern that leads to the palace of Pluto. Mind, however, that you do not go empty-handed, but carry a cake in either hand, made of barley and honey, and a couple of farthings in your mouth. The first you will want to stop the jaws of Cerberus, and the latter to pay old Charon, for dead or living he will ferry no one over the Styx till he has got his fare. When you have gone some way you will meet a lame ass* carrying wood, driven by a fellow who is also lame, and who will ask you to pick up some of the sticks for him, but pass on and say nothing. Next you will come to Charon; let the covetous old rogue take one of the farthings from your mouth himself, and when you are in his boat you will see an aged spectre floating on the water, who will hold up his mouldering hands and cry to be taken in; but yield you not to a compassion that is forbidden. The river being passed, you will come upon some old women spinning,† and they also will pray

* None of the commentators have been able to explain this, or the following allusion; they evidently refer to some superstition of which we nowhere else find mention.

† The Parcæ, or Fates.

of you to help them; but do nothing of the kind, for all these are snares set for you by Venus, in the hope that you may drop one of your cakes, which if you should do, you will never see the light of day again, since you will have nought left wherewith to bribe the three-headed dog Cerberus upon your return. Arrived at the palace of Proserpine, she will receive you kindly, and invite you to sit and feast with her; but do you seat yourself on the ground and eat of nothing save brown bread, after which you must tell her the purpose of your coming, and having received her gift for Venus come back directly. Then, as you gave one cake to Cerberus before, so now you must give him the other that he may let you pass freely, and the remaining farthing to Charon. One thing, however, I must particularly caution you against; on no account open the box, or be curious to know what it contains.

Up to a certain point Pysche followed the advice of the prophetic tower with great punctuality. She found Tænarus, passed the ass and his driver in silence, paid the ferryman his fare, took no note of the swimming spectre, fed Cerberus, refused to help the spinners, would eat nothing but brown bread, and came away safely with her box. Once again in the light of day the old curiosity of her sex began to stir within her, and to whisper that she might as well take a little of the beauty for her own use, and thus become more pleasing in the eyes of Cupid; why should she give it all to Venus, who had treated her so cruelly? So she opened the box, when lo! there was nothing visible within it; but a Stygian sleep—the sleep of death—arose from it, felt though not seen, and invaded all her senses, and she fell to the earth, and lay there a slumbering corse.

But the trials of Pysche were destined to have a fairer end than could have been expected. Cupid, who had by

this time recovered of his burn, and who could no longer endure the absence of his wife, slipt through his prison-window, and flew on the wings of love to her assistance. Carefully brushing the fatal sleep from her eyes, he enclosed it again in the box, and waking her with the blunted end of an arrow, said, "Ah Psyche! again has thy curiosity well-nigh destroyed thee. But now arise, and fulfil the hests of my mother, and in the meantime I will provide for the rest."

While Pysche, thus encouraged, set out to fulfil her mission, Cupid, who feared the anger of his mother, betook himself to the footstool of Jove, and there pleaded his own cause so well, that the god-king granted all he desired, and immediately summoned a general congress of all the deities under a penalty of a thousand pounds to whomsoever should be absent. A fine so heavy produced immediate obedience, and when they were all assembled Jupiter in an excellent speech, full of morals and fine sentiments, enlarged upon the peccadillos of Cupid, to which he said it was high time to put an end by giving him a wife who would look after him. Then, turning to Venus, he added, "and you, my dear daughter, trouble not yourself about the bride being only a mortal; I will myself take care that the marriage is all right and proper according to the canons of the civil law." Herewith he commanded a splendid banquet to be spread, at which order the countenances of all his guests began visibly to brighten up, and Pysche being fetched to him by Mercury, he held out to her a sparkling goblet of ambrosia, saying at the same time, "Drink and be immortal; may Cupid never fly from your embraces, but may your nuptials last for ever."

This short speech was mightily applauded by all the gods and goddesses, who now sate down to the feast in high good humour. Ganymede ministered the cup to

Jove; Bacchus served the rest of the company; Vulcan cooked the supper; the Hours crimsoned all around with roses; the Graces scattered perfumes; the Muses sang, while Apollo accompanied them on his harp; Venus, now reconciled to the match, or appearing to be so, danced, as only Venus can dance, to the sweetest music; Satyrus played the flute, and Paniscus* recited verse to the sound of the pipe.

Thus was Pysche lawfully married to Cupid, and their first child was Pleasure.

* According to Pliny (Lib. 35. c. xi.) a certain painter, by name Tauriscus, "pictured a little Pan, whom he called Paniscus, in manner of an antick." Cicero, however, tells us that the Panisci were inferior deities who presided over woods and fields. They were in fact little Pans, and were much the same as the Satyrisci, or little Satyrs.

THE MONTHS—MARCH.

March the bleak!—March the boisterous!—and what is worse, March who brings that ugly rascal, Quarter Day, in his train—"post equitem sedet atra Cura,"—and of all the forms which Care puts on, probably that of Quarter Day is one of the blackest. But nevertheless March has his good qualities. He is the harbinger of Spring, though a rough one, and his gales, when most furious, are only helping to dry up the excessive moisture of the earth, so that according to the old proverb, "a bushel of March dust is worth a king's ransom." This applies particularly to the heavier and more productive lands, which, from their marly nature retain the dew and rains of the preceding months much longer than the lighter soils.

In regard to his birth and parentage, he was at one time the year's eldest son, but, somehow January has contrived to snap up his inheritance, although well-nigh the youngest of the family. He was called by the Saxons *Rhedmonath*, which some have derived from the deity, Rheda, to whom sacrifices were offered in this month; but others maintain that it comes from the Saxon ræd, i.e. council, March being the time when the

Goths usually met in council, previous to their wars and expeditions. It had also the name of *Klydmonath*, from *Klyd*, meaning "stormy," an epithet which March may seem to have fairly deserved from its high winds. Finally it was known as *Lenct-monat*. "The month of March," says Verstegan, "they (the Saxons) called Lenct-monat, that is, according to our new orthography, Length-month, because the days did then first begin in length to exceed the nights. And this month being by our ancestors so called when they received Christianity, and consequently therewith the ancient Christian custom of fasting, they called this chief season of fasting, the fast of LENCT, because of the *lenct monat*, wherein the most part of the time of fasting always fell; and hereof it cometh that we now call it *Lent*, it being rather the fast of *Lent*, though the former name of *Lent-monat* be long since lost, and the name of March borrowed instead thereof." So far Verstegan; and it is only necessary to add that its present name of March is borrowed from the Romans, with whom it was the first month of the year, and who dedicated it therefore to Mars, as being, in their opinion, the father of their founder Romulus. According to Ovid, the god of war was mightily pleased with this proof of family respect and devotion:—

A te principium Romano ducimus anno;
Primus de patrio nomine mensis eat;
Vox rata fit, patrioque vocat de nomine mensem;
Dicitur hæc pietas grata fuisse Deo.

It is thus rudely "Englished by W. S."

"With thee will we begin our Romane yeare,
And our first month thy noble name shall wear.
His word's made good; this month he thus did call,
And pleas'd his father very well withall."
Ovid's Festivalls, p. 49. By W. S. London, 1639.

* P. Ovidii Nas; Fastorum. Lib. iii. v. 75

Without disputing the claim of Mars to stand godfather to this month, or of the Romans, if they liked it, to be his children, there are good astronomical reasons for March being the commencement of the year, while January would seem to have been chosen only from caprice. So thought our ancestors, as well as the Romans, and so too thought the Israelites in obedience to the divine command,* which enjoined that this should be the commencement of their *sacred* year, as their *civil* year began in September. The change with us is comparatively speaking of recent date, for prior to the September of 1752, our *Civil* or *Legal Year* began on the Day of the Annunciation, i.e. on the 25th of March. Now this was coming much nearer to astronomical truth; but unfortunately the so-called *Historical year* had for a long time begun on the Day of the Circumcision, i.e., the 1st of January; and to avoid the confusion arising between the two, it was enacted that both should date from the same period. The change, no doubt, removed a cause of some confusion in the calendar, but it was at the expense of much absurdity.†

* "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying; This month shall be unto you the beginning of months, it shall be the *first month of the year* to you." Exodus, chap. xii. v. 1 and 2.

It is curious to see how closely the Passover of the Jews agrees with the time when the sun crosses or *passes over* the equator, an event that could hardly have failed to be celebrated with appropriate rites and ceremonies amongst a people so devoted to astronomy as the Egyptians, who had educated Moses.

† The confusion is indeed manifest, almost too much so to need being pointed out. For example; in describing the year between the 1st of January and the 25th of March, civilians called each day within that period one year earlier than historians; while

the former wrote—January 7th, 1658.
the latter wrote—January 7th, 1659.

though both described the 25th of the following March, and all the

Independent of all other considerations, spring appears to be the natural beginning of the year, as winter is the fitting close of it.*

This change of season is seen more or less distinctly

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ensuing months, as being in the year 1659. To prevent the mistakes incident to so complex an arrangement, the doubtful part of each year was usually written in accordance with both modes, by placing two figures at the end; the upper being the *Civil*, or *Legal* year,—and the lower, the *Historical;* thus:

Feby. 3rd. 164 $\frac{8}{9}$ —Civil year.
—Historical year.

Hence, whenever the year is so written, the lower figure always indicates the year now used in our calendar.

While I am upon this subject, the following quotation from Sir H. Nicolas's *Notitia Historica* will not be altogether out of place in regard to that alteration in the calendar which forms what is usually called the *Old* and *New Style*, premising only that it commenced on the 2nd of September, 1752, on which day the *Old Style* ceased, and the next day, instead of being called the 3rd, became the 14th of September. The cause of the change is thus explained—"The calendar was farther improved by Julius Cæsar, who, finding that the sun performed his course in 365¼ days nearly, gave 365 days to each three years, but to every fourth year 366 days, adding a day before the 6th of the Calends of February, which was then reckoned twice; and hence from his *sextus* we have the term, *Bissextile* or *Leap year*. But the astronomers concerned in reforming the calendar under Pope Gregory XIII., observing that in four years the Bissextile added 44 minutes more than the real course of the sun, and finding that in 133 years this would cause a difference of a day, directed that in the course of every 400 years there should be three Sextiles retrenched, the years, expressing the centuries, not being leap-years unless divisible by 4." Thus, 1600 and 2000 are bissextile; but 1700, 1800, and 1900 are not. This improvement was adopted in England in 1752 in pursuance of an act of Parliament, in which it was ordered that the day next following the 2nd of September should be accounted the 14th, the omission of the intermediate days causing the difference between the *Old Style* and the *New*. By the same act the commencement of the *Civil year* was changed from the 25th of March to the 1st of January."

* It is true that the real, or astronomical, spring does not com-

marked, according to the temperature, by the whole of the animal creation. Bats rouse up from their winter sleep; the wood-cock, the field-fare, and the other birds, that had hybernated with us on account of our milder climate, now return to the more northern regions; the rooks are all in motion, building or repairing their nests; the ring-dove coos, the pheasant crows, the throstle sings on the top of some as yet leafless tree, and the bee is on the wing. In the waters and on the earth the busy stir of life is no less visible; the little smelts or sparlings run up the rivers to spawn, and the young lambs make their first appearance in the meadows. In addition to the flowers of the preceding month, we have now the crown imperial, the dog's-tooth violet, narcissus, hyacinth, fritillaries, scarlet ranunculus, pile-wort, tulip, great snow-drop, and violet perfuming the forest-air with its fragrance.

St. David's Day opens the month, taking its appellation from the saint of that name, who flourished in the fifth and sixth ages of the Christian era, and died, it is said, at the age of a hundred and forty years.* Perhaps this longevity ought to be set down amidst the other miracles recorded of St. David.

The custom of wearing the leek upon this day, has been variously accounted for. In the *Festa Anglo-Romana*† we are told "that the Britons on this day, constantly wear a leak in memory of a notable and famous victory obtained by them over the Saxons, they during the battle having leeks in their hats for their military colours and distinction of themselves, by per-

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mence till about the 20th or 21st, but so slight a difference can not affect the question; spring in the vulgar reckoning begins with the month.

* Vide Pitt *De Illustribus Angliæ Scriptoribus.*

† 12mo. London, 1678, p. 29.

suasion of Saint David."* Other accounts add that they were fighting under their King Cadwallo, near a field in which that vegetable was growing, at Hethfield, or Hatfield, Chase, in Yorkshire, A. D. 633.† King James‡ informs us that the "Welshmen in commemoration of the great fight by the Black Prince of Wales do wear leeks as their chosen ensigns." Owen§ flatly disowns the saint, imagining that the custom arose from the *Cymhortha*, a neighbourly aid of various kinds afforded by the farmers to any one of their class, who was not able to help himself. The manner of it in some districts was thus; at an appointed time they all met to assist him in ploughing, or in whatever other agricultural service their help was needed; on which occasion they each brought with them a portion of leeks to be used in making a general mess of pottage. But not one of these accounts appears to me more satisfactory than the other, and, though it might be difficult to disprove them, it is no less difficult to believe them. There seems, however, to be a glimpse of truth dawning upon us from another quarter. The onion was sacred amongst the Egyptians;‖

* Hone quotes the same account from Brady's *Clavis Calendaria*, and is exceedingly wrath with his author for not telling where he found his information. A better proof of the careless way, in which Hone got up his book, and the very small stock of information he brought to his task, could hardly be desired. In Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, a work familiar to every tyro, there is given under the head of St. David's this identical version of the story, with a reference to the *Festa*, above quoted.

† *Britannia Sancta*, vol. ii. p. 163. Lewis' *History of Britain*, p. 215 et seq. *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, (Eng. Trans.) Book xii. chap. 8 & 9; Carte's Hist. of England, vol. i. p. 228.

‡ *Royal Apothegms*. 12mo. London, 1658.

§ *Cambrian Biography*, 8vo. London, 1803, p. 86.

‖ "Allium cepasque," says Pliny, "inter Deos in jurejurando habet Egyptus." The Egyptian in swearing holds the leek and onion amongst the Gods. *Nat. Hist.* Lib. 19—32. Juvenal also,

and, however we may account for it, there is scarcely a rite or ceremony amongst any people without a precedent in one of earlier date. Keeping this fact steadily in view, it would seem probable that the leek, like the misletoe among the Druids, or the bean amongst the Pythagoreans, had at one time a mystic and religious meaning, and that the custom has survived although its origin has been forgotten.

The next day of note is St. Patrick's Day, which falls upon the seventeenth. Though he is held by the Irish to be their patron saint he was either a Scot or a Welshman. Butler says he was born, according to his own confession,* "in a village called *Bonaven Taberniæ*, which seems to be the town of Killpatrick, on the mouth of the river Clyd in Scotland, between Dumbriton and Glas-

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Sat. xv. when holding up the Egyptian superstitions to contempt says,

> "Porrum et cæpe nefas violare et frangere morsu.
> O sanctas gentes, quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis
> Numina!"

Thus rendered by Gifford;

> "'Tis dangerous here
> To violate an onion or to stain
> The sanctity of leeks with tooth profane.
> O holy nation! sacrosanct abodes!
> Where every garden propagates its Gods."

The same thing is mentioned by Prudentius;

> "Appone porris religiosas arulas;
> Venerare acerbum cæpe, mordax allium."
> Περιστεφανων, Hymn x. v. 258.

In plain English "Raise sacred altars to the leek; worship the sharp onion, the biting garlic."

* Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, &c.* vol. ix. p. 177. edit. Dublin, 1789. *Dumbriton*, as Butler has it, or *Dumbritoun*, as it is spelt in the old maps, is the antiquated mode of writing Dumbarton.

gow;" while others say that he was born in the vale of Rhos in Pembrokeshire; and Jones asserts he was of Caernarvonshire,* his original name being Maenwyn. Even the date of his birth is doubtful, nothing being known for certain in this respect except that he was born some time towards the end of the fourteenth century. The ecclesiastical name of Patricius† was given to him by Pope Celestine, when he consecrated him a bishop, and sent him over to Ireland for the purpose of bringing the wild natives within the pale of the Church. Upon landing at Wicklow in 433, he immediately commenced his task of preaching and converting; but his hearers took in very ill part this attack upon their old religion and were nigh stoning him to death, when he plucked up a trefoil by the root and asked, "is it not as feasible for the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as for these three leaves thus to grow upon a single stalk?" So persuaded, they tell us, were the Irish by this happy illustration, that they at once renounced their paganism and allowed the good bishop to baptize them on the spot.

If such indeed were the case, it must be allowed they had a marvellous proneness to conviction. We fear, however, the legend may be disputed by the incredulous, who happen to recollect that the Druids used the trefoil for medical purposes, and that they held the mystic number, *three*, in high veneration, deeming the misletoe sacred because its leaves and berries grew in clusters of three, united to one stem.‡ Not being gifted with the proper degree of faith, such sceptics might be inclined to

* Jones' *Historical Account of the Welsh Bards*. Fol. Lond. 1794, p. 13, note.

† Ribadeneira explains this to mean "pere de plusieurs," *the father of many*, a rather ambiguous cognomen for a single gentleman whether clerical or laic. Tom. i. p. 344. Fol. Paris, 1686.

‡ Vallancy's *Grammar of the Irish Language*.

infer that the wearing of the shamrock on a particular day, like the Welshman's badge of the leek, was merely the Christian adoption of some forgotten pagan custom,* or else that it proceeded from the regard in which the herb was held for its medicinal properties. The two suppositions are so far from being inconsistent with each other, that they might be considered as cause and effect, this triad of leaves being one reason for attributing to the herb its sanative virtues.

In Ireland this day is one of national rejoicing, the saint being in high odour for his numerous miracles, the most useful of which was unquestionably his driving all noxious reptiles out of the country, and forbidding them to return, under penalty it may be presumed of spiritual censure.

* It is not a little singular, that Spenser, who had such good opportunities of knowing the truth, should have described the shamrock as being synonymous with the water-cress; when speaking of the distress, to which the Irish were reduced by the wars in Munster, he says, "if they found a plot of *water-cresses*, or *shamrocks*, there they flocked as to a feast for the time." *View of the State of Ireland*, A. D. 1596, Fol. Dublin, 1633. p. 72. That the Irish used the shamrock for food is certain, whatever it may have been. Thus in Wyther's *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, 8vo. London, 1613, p. 71,

> "And for my cloathing in a mantle goe,
> And feed on *Sham-roots*, as the Irish doe."

Again in Sir Henry Piers' Description of Westmeath in Vallancey's *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, v. i. p. 121, "They have a custom every May-day, which they count their first day of summer, to have to their meal one formal dish, whatever else they have, which some call stir-about or hasty-pudding, that is flour and milk boiled thick; and this is holden for an argument of the good-wife's good housewifery, that made her corn hold out so well; for if they can hold out so long with bread they count they can do well enough for what remains of the year till harvest; for then milk becomes plenty; and butter, new cheese, and curds, and *shamrocks, are the food of the meaner sort all this season.*

Even spiders were included in the general ban ;* nor is it any impeachment of the truth of the record that the prohibition has long since ceased to have effect except in the eyes of the faithful, who are gifted with a clearness of vision unfortunately denied to the Sassenach and the unbeliever.

Another feature of this day remains to be noticed. In February 1783, a brotherhood was created by letters patent, under the name of "Knights of the Illustrious Order of Saint Patrick ;" and for the more grace of the new institution the sovereign of the day was to be its head, under whom were fifteen knights companions, while "the lieutenant general, and general governor of Ireland, or the lord deputy, or deputies, or lords justices, or other chief governor or governors for the time being, were to officiate as deputy grand-masters." By the statutes of the order the badge is to be of gold, surmounted with a wreath of shamrock, in this instance understood to mean trefoil, surrounding a golden circlet, on which is the motto of the brotherhood in letters of the same—*quis separabit ?*—with the date of their foundation, encircling Saint Patrick's cross *gules*, surmounted with a trefoil *vert*, each leaf charged with an imperial crown *or*, upon a field *argent*. This badge, encircled with rays in form of a silver star of eight points, four greater and four lesser, is directed to be worn on the left side of the outer garment.

Mid-lent Sunday is the fourth Sunday in Lent, or that

* According to Hone, Ribadeneira when speaking of this miracle says, "it is reported of King's College, Cambridge, that being built of Irish wood no spider doth ever come near it." I do not, myself, remember to have heard such a report in my college-days, but nevertheless believe it just as firmly as if I had. In regard to the quotation, Hone must have made some mistake, for nothing of the kind occurs in Ribadeneira's short notice of St. Patrick.

which immediately precedes Palm Sunday; and was variously called, *Mothering* Sunday, *Rose* Sunday, *Lætare* Sunday, *Care* or *Carl* Sunday, *Passion* Sunday, and *Refreshment* Sunday. The name of *Mid-lent* speaks for itself, and needs no explanation. *Mothering Sunday* may involve a question; yet it seems highly probable that it came in the first instance from the Roman Hilaria,* a festival held by the ancients in honour of the *Mother* of the Gods. The Catholic Clergy, who could not well get rid of a holiday so firmly established with the multitude, turned it to their own purpose, as they did so many other ancient festivals, and introduced a custom amongst the people of visiting the *Mother Church*, to make their offerings at the high altar; which, in some way or other, was supposed to be typical of the Jerusalem above, "the mother of us all." †

In process of time, after the Reformation had superseded the ancient faith, the oblations brought to the Church were converted into gifts presented by children to their parents; hence some have erroneously derived this designation from the latter custom, in utter ignorance, it would seem, that such affectionate remembrances were but the shadows of an older ceremony. But whatever we

* The *Hilaria*, from which we have got our term of *Hilary*, took place at the time of the vernal equinox, being the eighth of the kalends of April, and was evidently borrowed from the Egyptians. The Mother of the Gods, the Earth—"quis enim ambigat matrem Deûm terram haberi?"—rejoiced in the return of Sol, just as Isis was supposed to mourn or rejoice for Osiris according to the change of season. There is surely deep meaning and much beauty in these religious fables of the old heathens, however they may have been disfigured by the gross additions of popular superstitions. In all of them there breathes a profound spirit of veneration for the One, the Omnipotent, through the medium of his works. For the ceremonies of the day consult *Macrobius* Saturnaliorum, Lib. 1, Vol. 1, p. 313. Biponti, 1778.

† Galat. iv. 26.

may choose to consider its origin, the thing is beyond all question, as the following instance will show, and hundreds might be given were it at all requisite:—"I happened to reside last year near Chepstow, in Monmouthshire, and there for the first time heard of *Mothering Sunday*. My enquiries into the origin and meaning of it were fruitless; but the practice thereabouts was for all servants and apprentices on Mid-Lent Sunday to visit their parents and make them a present of money, a trinket, or some nice eatable; and they are all anxious not to fail in this custom."*

It had the title of *Refreshment Sunday* or *Dominica de Panibus*, because the miracle of the five loaves in the holy gospel was then explained in the Roman Church.†

The name of *Rose Sunday*, or *Dominica de Rosâ*, was also given to this day—an appellation it received from the Pope's carrying a golden rose in his hand, which he exhibited to the people in the streets as he went to celebrate the Eucharist, and at his return.‡ If we may believe Durandus this rose had a twofold signification, according as it was explained, after the letter, or in the spirit. Taken in its literal meaning it signified that the faithful, who might be supposed worn out by the long fast, were now to indulge themselves, for it was a season which the church allowed and wished to be one of general enjoyment. Three things, therefore, belong to this day; charity after fasting; joy after sorrow; and satiety after hunger; all of which are typified in the qualities of the rose; charity in its colour; joy in its perfume; and satiety in its flavour; for the rose above all flowers delights by its colour, refreshes by its perfume, and comforts by its

* Gentleman's Magazine, Feb. 1784

† *Festa Romanorum*, p. 36. London, 1677.

‡ Shepherd's *Elucidation of the Book of Common Prayer*, Vol. 2, p. 100.

flavour. In addition to this the rose in the hand of the Roman Pontiff signifies the joy of the Israelites when by the grace of Christ they were permitted to return from their Babylonish captivity. And many other reasons there are, equally metaphysical and equally cogent, as to the literal meaning of the ceremony.

Next as to its spiritual import. The rose is that flower, which says of itself in the Psalms, "I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valley." It is the flower of flowers, *i. e.* the holy of holies, all its qualities having a symbolical reference to the superiority of the Church, which they who wish to understand will do well to consult Durandus.*

Lætare Sunday was derived from the first word of the Introit, "*Lætare* Jerusalem, et conventum facite omnes, qui diligitis eam; gaudete cum lætitia, qui in tristitia fuistis, ut exultetis et satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestræ."† Rejoice, O Jerusalem, &c.

Care or *Carl Sunday* was one of the most general appellations given to this day, and is that which has occasioned the greatest trouble to antiquarians, who, when they had found the truth, could not keep fast hold of it, but preferred exhausting their ingenuity in a parcel of vain conjectures. In the first place it should be remembered that rites more peculiarly appropriate to *Good Friday* were used by the Roman Catholics on this day, from which they also called it *Passion* Sunday; and, taking this for our guide, we shall have no difficulty in understanding what follows. Amongst the Germans, Good Friday had not unfrequently the name *Karr* or *Carrfreitag*, as Passion Week had that of *Carwoche*, meaning the *penalty of a crime*, or rather *the satisfying of*

* *Rationale Divin. Officia*, p. 207. 4to. Venetiis, 1609.

† Shepherd's *Elucidation of the Book of Common Prayer*, vol. 2, p. 101.

an imposed penalty;* and it might therefore allude either to man's redemption by the Passion of Christ, or to the peculiar fasts and penances which all Christians endured more particularly at this solemn season, to obtain the Church's remission of their sins.

* The meaning of the word rests upon too good authority to be doubted. Hospinian, *De Origine Fest. Christ.* (fol. 54) says "Germani hanc septimanam—i. e. hebdomadam Passionis—vocant *die Karrwochen* a vetusto illo Germanico vocabulo, Karr, quo mulctam, seu pœnam pro delicto, vel potius satisfactionem pro pœnâ et mulctâ nominarunt. Quando enim in foro judiciali reus, pro mulctâ a judice sibi impositâ, læso pro injuriâ damnove satisfacit, dicimus, "er hat ihm ein abtrag, *karr*, oder aberwandel gethan." Ab hoc civili usu postea sacrificuli mulctas, quas pœnitentibus pro satisfactione delictorum imposuerunt, etiam in Latinâ linguâ Germanico vocabulo nominârunt *Carrinas*. Alii tamen scribunt *Carenam*, et a *carendo* derivant. Est hujus vocabuli frequens usus apud Burckhardum, Uvormaciæ episcopum circa annum Domini, 1020, lib. 9. et in vetustis indulgentiarum bullis. Fuit igitur *carena* apud veteres in ecclesiâ jejunium aliquot dierum in solo pane et aquâ. Vocârunt ergò hebdomadam hanc Germani *die Karrwochen*, quòd in eâ pœnitentiam, hominibus a sacerdote impositam, communiter omnes agerent jejuniis, vigiliis, &c., pro peccatis admissis, quâ se Deo satisfacere posse falsò persuasum habebant. Potest tamen pio sensu sic vocari septimana hæc; in eâ siquidem pro mulctâ, à justo Deo humano generi impositâ, filius Dei in cruce morte suâ satisfecit, eosque ab æternâ damnatione liberavit. Ob easdem causas quoque dies Dominicæ passionis, der *Karrfreitag* appellatur." Hospinian De Orig. Fest. Christ. p. 54. Fol. Tiguri. 1612. It may be thus translated—"The Germans called this week Karrwoche, from that ancient German word, *Karr*, by which they signified the mulct or penalty for an offence, or rather the satisfaction of the mulct or penalty. For when in our courts of law, the condemned acquits himself to the injured party of the fine imposed upon him by the judge for the wrong done, we say that he has made amends, or given *Karr*, i. e. satisfaction. From this judicial use of the word, they afterwards called by the name of *Carrinas* the penance imposed by the priestlings on their penitents in satisfaction of their sins, the German phrase passing even into the Latin language. Others, however, write *carenam*, and derive it from *carendo*. The use of this word is common with Burckhard,

It was customary on this day to give a dole of beans to the poor, under the name of *carlings*, a word formed from *carr* just as dearling is the diminutive of dear; and even when the nature of the dole was changed, still it preserved the same appellation. Beans, peas, furmety, and whatever was the *peculiar* gift of the season, all were called carlings. Some, however, would derive *carl*, and *care* or *carr*, from two different roots, and would persuade us the day is called *Carl Sunday* because the gifts then made are to the *carl* or *ceorl*, i. e. husbandman. But this is too absurd to need refutation.

In some parts the word *carling* would seem to have been corrupted into *Whirlin* or *Whirling*. Thus a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1789, p. 491, observes, that "in several villages in the vicinity of Wisbech, in the Isle of Ely, the fifth"—qy. fourth?—"Sunday in Lent has been for time immemorial commemorated by the name of Whirlin Sunday, when cakes are made by almost every family, and are called from the day *whirlin* cakes.*

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the Bishop of Worms, about 1020, and also in the old Indulgences. *Carena*, therefore, was amongst the old ecclesiastics a fast of some days upon mere bread and water. Hence the Germans called this week, Care-week, because all men performed in it the penance, imposed by the priests for their acknowledged sins, with fasts, vigils, &c., by which they falsely persuaded themselves they might satisfy God. This week, however, may be so called in a pious sense; inasmuch as the Son of God by his death upon the cross satisfied the penalty imposed by the Divine Judge upon the human race, and freed them from eternal damnation. For the same reasons the day of our Lord's Passion is called Car-Friday."

* Brand and his faithful Sancho Panza have fallen here into a strange error. They quote as an instance of whirling cakes, or at least of something to be eaten under the name of *whirlin*, the following passage from the *Annalia Dubrensia*, or *Cotswold Games*;

"The country wakes and whirlings have appear'd
Of late *like foreign pastimes.*"

Originally beans were amongst the doles given at funerals,* which will account tolerably well for their use upon a day sacred to the passion of Christ. But the custom has, beyond doubt, been borrowed from the ancients, who had some strange notions respecting this kind of pulse. They fancied that in the blossom of the bean they could read the word *luctus*, or grief, and held that they belonged to the dead, whose soul resided in them. There were, however, many religious uses of beans amongst the Romans. Ovid, when speaking of the offerings made at certain periods to the dead, says, the sacrificer rises with naked feet, and having washed his hands, flings black beans over his shoulder, exclaiming at the same time, "with these beans I redeem myself and mine."† This is repeated nine times without looking behind him, in which case the ghost follows and picks them up, though what he does with them the poet has forgotten to tell us.‡

Surely a cake cannot be called a pastime, however amusing may be the eating of it. Any one but Sir Henry Ellis must at once see that this is an allusion to the Northern *game of curling*.

* "Fabis Romani sœpius in sacrificiis funeralibus operati sunt, nec est ea consuetudo abolita alicubi inter Christianos, ubi in eleemosynam pro mortuis fabæ distribuuntur."—*Moresini Papatus*, in voce.

† Terque manus puras fontanâ perluit undâ;
Vertitur, et nigras accipit ante fabas,
Aversusque jacit; sed dum jacit, "hæc ego mitto
His," inquit, "redimo meque meosque fabis."
Hoc novies dicit, nec respicit. Umbra putatur
Colligere, et nullo terga vidente sequi.
Fastorum, Lib. v. V. 435, et seq.

‡ Skelton in his Colin Clout gives another example of this custom:

"Men call you therefore profanes,
Ye pick no shrympes nor planes;
Salt-fish, stock-fish, nor herring,
It is not for your wearing.

Pliny is exceedingly minute upon this subject, and though what he has said in regard to it must of course be familiar to many, it is yet interesting enough to be repeated in the old translation by Philemon Holland—"Moreover by ancient rites and religious ceremonies at the solemn sacrifice, called Fabaria, the manner was to offer unto certaine Gods and Goddesses *beane cakes*. This was taken for a strong food, being eaten with a thicke grewell or pottage; howbeit, men thought that it dulled a man's senses and understanding, yea, and caused troublesome dreams in the night; in regard of which inconveniences, Pythagoras expressly forbade to eat beans; but, as some have thought and taught, it was because folks imagined that the soules of such as were departed, had residence therein; which is the reason also that they be ordinarily used and eaten at the funerals and obsequies of the dead. Varro also affirmeth that the great priest, or sacrificer, called the flamine, abstaineth from beanes both in those respects aforesaid, as also for that there are to be seene in the flower thereof certain letters or characters that shewe heavinesse and signes of deathe. Furthermore there was observed in old time a religious ceremonie in beanes; for when they had sowed their grounds, their manner was, of all other corne, to bring backe with them out of the fielde some beanes for good-lucke sake, presaging thereby that their corne would returne home againe unto them; and these beanes were thereupon called in Latin, *Refrivæ*, or *Referivæ*. Likewise, in all port-sales, it was thought that if beanes were intermingled with the goods offered to be sold they would be luckie and gainful to the seller. This is certain, that

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Nor in holy Lenton season
Ye will neither beanes nor peason,
But ye look to be let loose
To a pigge or to a goose."

of all the fruits of the earth, this only will be full and sound when the moon is croisant, notwithstanding, it were growne and half eaten before."—Plinie's Natural Historie, Book 18, c. 12.*

At Newcastle-upon-Tyne, grey peas, steeped for a night in water and fried in butter, were substituted for beans, though for what cause does not appear, unless from being more palatable, or more suitable to the season.

* In the Latin, however, it is cap. 30 and not 12. The real cause why the Pythagoreans held beans in so much veneration was kept a profound secret both by the philosopher and his disciples, the pride of possessing an exclusive mystery being found sufficient to subdue the usual motives for talking. Jamblichus, in his life of Pythagoras, (cap. 31 p. 393, 8vo. Leipsic 1815,) relates a story of the Lacedemonian Timycha, the wife of Myllius the Crotonian, which equals the savage fortitude of Regulas.—Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, having in vain tried to conciliate the friendship of the Pythagoreans, sent out his soldiers to hunt them down and destroy them, and his emissary succeeded in surprising a small party of them, who immediately took to flight. Being perfectly unincumbered they would have escaped their pursuers, but unluckily they came upon a field of beans at that time in full blossom, when, sooner than violate their creed by treading on the sacred legumes, they turned to bay, and fought to defend themselves with sticks and stones. In a short time they were all slaughtered. The soldiers, now returning, chanced to meet Myllius and his wife Timycha, who had been left behind by their friends because the advanced pregnancy of the latter prevented her keeping up with them in their flight. Satisfied with the previous bloodshed the soldiers forbore to harm them, but carried them to Dionysius, and he, having heard the tale and being urged by curiosity promised them not only their lives but all sorts of reward and honour if they would only explain why their companions had preferred dying to trampling upon the beans.—"And I," said Myllius, "would rather have trod down the beans than reveal the reason of such abstaining." Hereupon Dionysius ordered Myllius to be taken out of his sight, and the torture to be applied to Timycha, imagining that pain and terror would force her to confession. But the heroic woman bit her tongue in half that it might not betray her, and spate it in his face.

The vestiges of this custom are frequent,* and it would seem that green peas too were often used, for Fosbrooke tells us in his *British Monachism*, "At Barking Nunnery, the annual store of provisions consisted of malt, wheat, russeaulx (a kind of allowance of corn) and to bake with eels on Sheer Thursday; green pease for Lent, green pease against Midsummer—"† and he adds in a note taken from the Order and Government of a Nobleman's House in the thirteenth volume of the Archæologia, p. 373, that "if one will have pease soone in the year following, such pease are to be sowenne in the waine of the moone at St. Andro's tide before Christmas."

But these doles, at all events in later times, do not appear to have been confined to either peas or beans. Furmety also was a standing-dish, a word derived by metathesis from the Latin, *frumentum*; it was made of what in Yorkshire was called, *kneed wheat*, that is, whole grains first boiled plump and soft, and then put into milk, when the mess was a second time boiled, and afterwards spiced and sweetened. It is also mentioned by a correspondent in the Gentleman's Magazine,‡ who says, "some things customarily probably refer simply to the idea of feasting or mortification according to the season and occasion. Of these perhaps are Lamb's Wool with

* In the Glossary to *The Lancashire Dialect*, 1775, carlings are thus explained: "*peas*, boiled on Care Sunday are so called." But the following account from a correspondent of the bland Sylvanus Urban, when speaking of the Northumberland custom, is yet more complete: "The yeomanry in general steep peas, and afterwards parch them, and eat them in the afternoon, and call them *Carlings*. This is said by an old author to have taken its rise from the disciples plucking the ears of corn and rubbing them in their hands." Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lvi. A.D. 1786. p. 1. 410. Whoever was the *old author* alluded to, he must have known very little of Pagan ceremonies.

† Vol. ii. p. 127.

‡ For 1783, p. 578.

Christmas Eve; Furmety, on Mothering Sunday; Braggot, which is a mixture of ale, sugar, and spices, at the Festival of Easter; and Cross Buns, Saffron-cakes, or Symnels in Passion Week; though these being, formerly at least, unleavened, may have a retrospect to the unleavened bread of the Jews, in the same manner as Lamb at Easter to the Paschal Lamb." The last remark seems very superfluous; but it is curious to see how soon our ancestors got rid of their mess of peas and beans, and how constantly they celebrated their fasts by eating something nicer than usual.

There was yet another custom peculiar to this day, which seems worthy of notice, although it was confined, as far as I know to Franconia. It has been thus described: "In the middle of Lent, the youth make an image of straw in the form of Death as he is usually depicted, and this they carry about upon a pole to the neighbouring villages, with much shouting. By some it is received kindly; they refresh the bearers with milk, *peas*, and dried pears, the common food of the season, and then send it home again; but others, deeming it a presage of evil—of death perhaps—repel it from their boundaries with abuse and violence."*

The most important saint of this month is St. Cuthbert, whose whole life from infancy was emblazoned in a window of Durham Cathedral, hence called St. Cuthbert's Window. By the nine altars is his tomb, "with most

* In medio quadragesimæ, quo quidem tempore ad lætitiam nos ecclesia adhortatur, juventus in patria meâ ex stramine imaginem contexit, quæ morfem ipsam (quemadmodum depingitur) imitetur; inde hastâ suspensâ in vicinos pagos vociferans portat. Ab aliquibus perhumanè suscipitur, et lacte, pisis, siccatisque pyris (quibus tum vulgo vesci solemus) refecta, domū remittitur; à cæteris, quia malæ rei (ut puta mortis) prænuncia sit, humanitatis nihil præcipit, sed armis et ignominiâ etiam adfectâ à finibus repellitur."—*Orbis Terrarum Epitome*, per Johannem *Boemum Aubanum*, p. 237, 12mo. Papiæ, 1596.

curious workmanship of fine and costly green marble, all lined and gilt with gold,"* which was so much frequented and enriched by pilgrims and others, "that it was esteemed one of the most sumptuous monuments in all England."† The top of the shrine was made to move up and down by means of lines to which silver bells were attached, and on St. Cuthbert's Day in Lent, the cover being lifted, the bells "made such a goodly sound that it stir'd all the people's hearts within the church to repair to it. . . . Also within the said feretory‡ on both north and south side there were ambries§ of fine wainscot, varnished and finely painted, and gilt over with fine little images very beautiful to behold for the reliques belonging to St. Cuthbert to lie in; and when his shrine was drawn the said ambries were opened, that every man that came thither at that time might see the holy reliques therein."‖

But this splendid shrine was forbidden to women. St. Cuthbert it seems was a mysogunist, and would allow no women to come near his tomb, having been sorely scandalized during his lifetime by a fair piece of frailty, who finding herself likely to disgrace the king, her father, laid the blame of her seduction to St. Cuthbert—"that solitary young man who dwelleth hereby is he who hath overcome me," said the lady, whereupon the saint in great alarm uttered a fervent prayer, and the earth opened and swallowed her up. The king at this convinced of Cuthbert's innocence now in turn begged forgiveness, which

* *Ancient Rites*, &c., p. 6. † Idem, p. 8.

‡ A *feretory* is the sarcophagus in which the body lies, from the Latin *feretrum*. Vide Ducange, sub voce.

§ *Ambrey* is derived by Minshew from the Latin, armorium, "forte quòd esset olim præcipuè pro armorũ conservatione—perhaps because it was formerly used chiefly to keep arms in."—He explains it, however, to mean a *cupboard*, and it is likely enough that he may be more correct than Barrett, who derives it from the French, *aumoniere*.

‖ *Ancient Rites*, p. 9.

the saint granted upon condition that no woman was allowed to approach him for the future. Hence even after his death his faithful disciples would not allow any woman to come near his feretory, last they should disturb the sleep of the saint even in the tomb.

Lady-Day, or the Day of Annunciation, is only an abridgement of *Our Lady's-Day*, and is peculiarly dedicated to the Virgin Mary, from its having been the season when the angel announced to her that she should bring forth a Son.* Its near approach to the vernal equinox, one of the natural divisions of the year, was, it may be supposed, the reason of its being called Quarter Day, since it marks, though not quite correctly, the first of the four quarters. Beyond this, the month has no day requiring a particular notice.

* St. Luke, chap. 1, v. 31, et seq.

LOUISA DE BUDOS.

Amongst the many supernatural tales that have emanated from professed ghost-seers, I know of few that in the semblance of truth go beyond old Sully's account of Louisa de Budos. He was so complete a matter-of-fact personage, wore so respectable a beard, and was so stiff, not to say grim, in his outward man, that no one could suppose him guilty of anything in the shape of weakness. The style too is singularly indicative of the man. He believes with a sincerity of spirit that scorns all ornament derived from the imagination, and narrates with so little attempt to convince, that it would be really a want of Christian charity not to give him credit for all he is pleased to advance. The following is the substance of his story, though the version is somewhat of the freest.

This is what is related of Louisa de Budos, the lady of the Constable Montmorency, and as it was affirmed by the noble dames then at her mansion. She was conversing with them gaily in her cabinet, when one of her women entered in great perturbation, and informed her that a stranger of goodly presence,—saving that he was quite black and of gigantic stature—had just entered the

ante-chamber, and desired to speak with her on matters of importance—"What was the nature of his communication?"—he could tell no one but herself. "What was he like?"—something very strange and awful, and his figure cast no reflection upon the mirrors as he past. The lady was visibly alarmed, as well she might be, at this account; she turned pale, and it was with infinite difficulty she could so far master her feelings as to desire her abigail to entreat the gentleman, in her name, that he would defer his very agreeable visit till another time. Upon this message being duly conveyed to him, he replied in a tone expressive of any thing but satisfaction, that if the lady would not come to him, he must be under the necessity of going to her, which he apprehended might not prove quite so pleasant. The noble dame seemed to be much of the same opinion; if she had little fancy for a private interview, she had still less for one in public, and therefore, though with visible reluctance she at length made up her mind to comply with an invitation, which, to say the truth, had very much the nature of a royal request—that is of a command.

Who the stranger was, or what passed at the meeting, was never known except by conjecture, and as every one can conjecture for himself it will not be necessary to repeat, even if we knew, all that was imagined upon this occasion. History should only deal with facts. Enough therefore that when the lady returned to her friends she was bathed in tears and seemed half dead with terror. In a few hurried words she assured them that she should never see them more, and scarcely was the sad prophecy spoken than she was seized with the most frightful convulsions, to the general alarm of all present. Her face, once so remarkable for beauty, in a few minutes underwent a change that was truly terrific; the art of the

physicians availed nothing; in three days she died, leaving some suspicious folks to imagine she was poisoned, and the wiser part of the world to believe that she had departed by virtue of a previous contract with the arch-fiend himself.

Such in substance is the story which Lawes has repeated in his Memorials, and which, not being able to imitate his laudable gravity, I have therefore told after my own fashion.

THE LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF PARACELSUS.

It is wonderful how Paracelsus has so long escaped being made the hero of a romance. He had all the qualifications for such a part, being an inextricable compound of credulity and knavishness, vanity and talent, a firm believer in the cabbala, yet an enemy to the established absurdities of science, and, to the boot of all, a vagabond of the first order, who had visited almost every country, and associated with every class of people, from the learned and the noble, to the most ignorant and humble. Yet justice has hardly been done by any writer to this singular personage. His alchemy and his astrology have always stood in the way of a fair estimate of his character, though there seems to be good reason for concluding that in these matters he did but believe with his age, and was only not wiser than the rest of the world in which he lived. Even Philip Melancthon was skilful in casting nativities, holding astrology to be a part of medicine and equally well grounded as the science itself, though he allows that the physicians went rather too far when they derived all changes in the human body from the stars. Nay, even his most violent opponents

are not free from his errors. The learned and distinguished Sennert,* while bitterly reproaching him for that he thought to overturn the ancient art of medicine, which he never thoroughly understood, yet allows he had done something in the transmutation of metals. With infinite gravity he relates, on the authority of a certain Franciscan, how Paracelsus made gold out of lead and quicksilver; and as the story may be of some use in the present age, when the precious metal is not too abundant, we shall give it in few words, hoping that whoever makes his fortune by the experiment will not forget from whom he

* Vide Sennerti Op. p. 192. Lugduni, 1676: which edition contains the whole six volumes compressed into one, but with considerable improvements. This eminent scholar and physician was born at Breslaw, the capital of Silesia, on the 25th of November, 1572. His father pursued the humble occupation of a shoemaker, but seems to have given him an excellent education, for we find him at the age of one-and-twenty studying medicine and philosophy at the university of Wittemberg, where he took his degree of Doctor of Physic, and at a year's end was made professor of the same faculty. It is said in his life prefixed to the folio, that he was the first who introduced the study of chemistry into that university, and throughout his works we find him almost as bold in denying the authority of the ancients as Paracelsus himself whom he censured. His heresy on this point gave great offence to the schoolmen, though their outcries do not appear to have diminished either his practice or his reputation. But he did not rest here: he wrote upon the Nature and Origin of Souls in Brutes—"De Origine et Natura animarum in Brutis;" p. 285,—and as this doctrine fairly led to the conclusion that an immortal spirit was not confined to man alone, he was in consequence accused of blasphemy and impiety, those vague words which have sent so many to the faggot. There is an excellent article in Bayle upon this subject which will save much time and labour to those who are too indolent to wade through Sennert's own defence of his creed, though it is well worth reading, if it were only to learn what strange fancies can possess themselves of the human brain. Amongst other things he maintained that metals and minerals were formed by intelligent and spiritual beings. He died of the plague at Wittemberg on the 21st of July, 1637.

acquired the recipe. Thus then it is:—Paracelsus being one day in want of money, a mishap very common to philosophers of all kinds, he gave a florin to one of his pupils, and desired him to fetch a pound of quicksilver from the chemist's. Having obtained what he required, he flung it into a crucible, and set it upon the fire; and when the mercury began to emit fumes, he gave a certain globule to the Franciscan, directing him to hold it immerged in the preparation by means of a pair of forceps, till such time as it should deliquesce. When this took place, he again placed them both upon the stove. They then all quitted the room; for it seems the devil of gold-making is a modest devil, and objects to work before strangers; but upon their return, in about half an hour, they found he had faithfully done his duty: the crucible was broken, and the composition transmuted into nearly a pound of the precious metal, for which a neighbouring goldsmith did not hesitate to give an equivalent in coin. What was the precise nature of the globule, the Franciscan never could find out; nor whether his preceptor made it or bought it; but he describes it as being of moderate size, something like a filbert, and enclosed in red sealing-wax.

The birth and parentage of our learned doctor, like those of many other great personages, has been a subject of much controversy. He chose to call himself, or he duly inherited the name of, *Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombast von Hohenheim*;* but there were not wanting unbelievers to call in question his claim to this constellation of titles, of which the *Bombast* seems to have been peculiarly applicable, considering the style of many

* Properly Philip Bombast von Hohenheim; but he added Theophrastus and Paracelsus as if he were something more than *celsus*,—high, or lofty,—*para* being a favourite prefix of his to express pre-eminence of any quality.

of his writings. Haller quotes the authority of a certain Lorenz Zollweger, to prove that he was in reality called *Höchener*, and that he was born at Einsiedeln, two miles from Zurich, in the canton of Appenzell. Erastus, one of his most bitter opponents,* goes farther. He tells us that he won't believe Paracelsus was born in Helvetia —"vix enim ea regio tale monstrum edidit,—that country could hardly have brought forth such a monster" —though he forgets to explain why Switzerland should not have its monsters as well as other places; in our days we have seen a Swiss giantess. So vehement is he in his wrath, that he will not even allow the Doctor had a human father:—"Terræ seu Tartari videtur filius instar Merlini cujusdam fuisse—he appears to have been the son of the earth, or of Tartarus, like a certain Merlin;" a supposition, by the way, that must have been rather agreeable than otherwise to one who dealt in necromancy as well as physic. This, however, is not all: "vocat se Eremitam et nobilis vult videri; at in Eremo Helvetiorum nulli sunt Paracelsi, nulli Hohenhemii, nulli Bombasti—he calls himself a native of Einsiedeln, and wishes to be thought noble; but in Helvetic Einsiedeln there are no Paracelsuses, no Hohenheimers, no Bombastes." Now, here the anger of our friend Erastus gets the better of his discretion; for there certainly was a noble family of that name, as we find one of them recorded by Shenck.† We may therefore set it down with tolerable certainty that he was born where he himself said he was, in the year 1493; that his mother was the superintendent of

* Erastus, who was a professor of medicine in the university of Heidelberg, wrote sundry dissertations, to the amount of two quarto volumes, proving, or attempting to prove, that Paracelsus was no better than an impostor; but, as is evident from the quotations in the text, he was anything but an impartial judge.

† Observ. lib. i. p. 15.

the abbey-hospital at Ensiedeln; that his father was called Wilhelm Bombast von Hohenheim, and was very nearly related to George Bombast von Hohenheim, the then grand-master of the order of St. John.

Worse than these debates respecting the Doctor's birth-place is the next tale that Erastus tells, and which, though it may be false in detail, is unfortunately too true in the principal point, as we know from other authorities—"Hoc in loco narratum mihi est exectos ei testes fuisse a milite dum anseres pasceret. Eunuchum fuisse, cum alia multa, tum facies, indicant; et quod, Oporino teste, fœminas prorsus despexit." * By some † it is said that the accident here recorded, and which it is unnecessary to translate, arose from the bite of a swine; but the fact, however it may have happened, has not been disputed and dates from a time when he was only three years old.

Of the early life of this extraordinary man—extraordinary at least in one sense of the word—we know but little. If any faith is to be given to his own assertions, he had studied for many years at German, Italian, and French, universities, ‡ after having been duly instructed in alchemy and astrology as well as medicine by his father, for in those days they had all equally the rank of a science; we have Helmont's authority also as to his diligence under some of the first masters of the age.§ He says of himself, that he had from youth upwards applied him-

* For this, and the foregoing, quotation, see "Erasti Disputatio de Medicina nova P. Paracelsi," Pars Prima, p. 237. Basileæ.

† Helmont says, "Non enim ille Veneri deditus, trivium nempe sus castraverat." Tartari, Hist. p. 222. And Gall, who examined his skull, found the organ of philoprogenitiveness undeveloped. See also Sprengel, vol. iii. p. 445.

‡ Hab also die hohen Schulen erfahren lange Jahr, bei den Teutschen, bei den Italischen, bei den Frankrpichischen. Die G. Wundartzneі—*Vorred.*

§ Tart. Hist. p. 222.

self to the study of medicine, with an eager desire to learn whether it did, or did not, merit the name of a science.

In this pursuit he seems to have been greatly disturbed by finding that the patients died in spite of physic; and he somewhat testily declares that there was not a single doctor who was able to cure a toothache, yet they all nevertheless went richly apparelled, and figured at the courts of princes with rings of gold and precious stones upon their fingers. Hereupon he took a disgust to medicine, becoming convinced that it was no more than a deception of the evil spirits to lead men astray—"ein betrugniss von Geistern den Menschen also zu verfuhren"*—and resolved to abandon the study of it, when, as good luck would have it, he chanced to stumble upon that passage of the New Testament, wherein Christ says, "they who are whole need not the physician, but they who are sick." By some odd process of reasoning—but Paracelsus was at all times a singular logician—he now became convinced that the medical art was neither deceptive nor diabolic, but on the contrary was a very necessary art to help people out of sickness. Having arrived at this conclusion, although by a rather round-about road, he again set to work in earnest; and indeed it must be acknowledged that he had an inquisitive mind, and a strong love of knowledge, though his enthusiastic and credulous nature was deeply tainted with the chimerical notions of his age. In that boundless spirit of enthusiasm, which formed so prominent a feature of his character, he now set out upon his travels, being no more than twenty years old when he journeyed through all the countries of Europe, east, west, north, and south, after the usual wont of students in those days, casting nativities, practising

* "Chirurgische Bucher und Schriften des P. Paracelsi." This is the general title of the whole volume, but the reference is to the Preface to the *Grosse* Wundarznei.

palmistry, evoking the dead, and trying all sorts of chemical experiments that he had learnt from the miners of various districts. If too we may believe the various accounts that have come down to us, he even extended his visits to Egypt and Muscovy, and when on the confines of the latter he was taken prisoner by the Tartars and carried before their Khan. By some means, not very clearly explained, or indeed not explained at all, he obtained his liberty, and passed over with the Khan's son to Constantinople for the purpose of learning the secret of the Elixir Vitæ from Trismolin, who at the time was residing there. Nor did he confine his curious enquiries to the learned, for whom by the bye he never seems to have entertained too much respect, but eagerly sought for information amongst the necromancers, alchymists, old women—the distinction is not very evident—and from the noble and ignoble. The result of all these enquiries and wanderings was that, according to his own account, at the age of twenty-eight he had obtained the philosopher's stone from an alchymist, and acquired so great a name by his numerous cures amongst nobles and princes, as well as amongst the poor, that in 1526 he was elected professor of physic and surgery in the university of Basel.* It might, perhaps, however have contributed to his elevation, that just at this time the introduction of the reformed religion into Basel † had stript the university of its old teachers, who had left it either for conscience-sake, or from compulsion.

The head of Paracelsus seems now to have been completely turned by inordinate vanity. In the November of this year we find him writing to Christopher Clauser, a physician in Zurich, "he should only compare him with

* I. Van Helmont, Opera: Hist. Tartari, p. 222; and Sprengel, v. iii. p. 432.

† Or, as our modern geographers choose to call it, *Bale*, deriving the name from the French *Basle*, instead of from the German *Basel*.

Hippocrates, Galen, Rasi, and Marsilius Ficinus—that every country produced its eminent physician, whose theories were precisely suited to the land in which he was born. The Archaus,* or genius of Greece, had given birth to Hippocrates; the Archaus, or genius of Arabia, to Rasi; the Archaus of Italy, to Ficinus; and that of Germany had produced him, Paracelsus." With this conceit of his own "ingine," as Ben Jonson would call it, he commenced his lectures by openly burning in his lecture-room the works of Galen and Avicenna. But there must have been both natural talent and acquired knowledge amidst all this bombast and self-conceit, for it is plain he effected many cures, and even attracted the notice of Erasmus, who did not hesitate to consult him upon the state of his health. Even if it be true, as Sprengel affirms, that he had no time to study books deeply, still he had seen much practice, and must in his travels have picked up a vast fund of current information upon medical topics. We should recollect, too, that in his day the lecture-room and conversation with the learned supplied in a great measure the deficiency of books, besides which he had served as an army surgeon for years in a variety of campaigns, and must at least have had a practical knowledge of his art. The great difficulty in estimating his character is to forget his absurd pretensions and to separate the better part of his know-

* Paracelsus was amazingly fond of calling old things by new names, and hence it is not always easy to understand exactly what he means, even supposing him at all times to have understood himself. In regard to *Archaus*, we are told by Sennert, "nihil aliud istud vocabulum significat quam quod in scholiis philosophorum et medicorum facultatem et virtutem naturalem, aut, si mavis, spiritum naturalem, facultatis naturalis ministrum, nominamus—(Sennerti Op. p. 193.)—that word signifies nothing else than what in the schools of philosophy and medicine we call the natural faculty and virtue, or, if you prefer it, the natural spirit, the servant of the natural faculty."

ledge from the astrological and other chimeras with which it was mingled, besides that he has been made answerable for a multitude of absurd writings, in which he had no share whatever. At all events his fame blazed forth for awhile like some extraordinary meteor, astonishing the people while it excited the bitterest hostility amongst his rivals. It was not, however, his empiricism they hated, for they themselves were all more or less empirics, but his greater success, with high and low, rich and poor, besides that he had scoffed at the Dagons of their idolatry, and, though himself in darkness and only introducing a new form of error, had at least shown that their ways were not the ways of truth. While they repeated the dogmas of the old school, and despatched people according to the established laws of medicine, he ventured upon a new path, picked up recipes everywhere and experimented with them upon the human body, killing or curing as the fates would have it. Theirs was a *learned* ignorance built upon books, and they never killed a patient without being able to quote chapter and verse from the ancients for their misdoings. His was a *practical* ignorance, and it would be absurd to deny that he often stumbled upon the truth, and effected cures without at all comprehending their rationale. He was like the mechanic, who puts together the finest instruments without understanding the laws of geometry. But unfortunately for him he had pitched his claims too high, and by pretending to infallibility exposed his title to be shaken at the first breath of ill-success. Other physicians limited their pretensions, and the exact amount of their ignorance therefore was less liable to be detected; but in his case the system was altogether true or altogether false; there could be no medium, no escape; and hence a few failures, proceeding from the injudicious use of laudanum, were enough to give a mortal blow to his

reputation. It is likely enough too that these accidents were the more readily believed and magnified from the general offence given by the excessive rudeness of his manners. This was a fault of which nothing could cure him; he gloried in it;* and reproached the courtesy of other physicians as a glaring proof of their want of merit. Intemperance was a yet more serious charge, and we are compelled to believe it true, since it rests upon the authority of Oporinus,† that faithful friend and disciple, who left wife and home to follow him in his wanderings, and was not to be deterred even by the drunkenness and poverty of his preceptor, for poor he often was in spite of the philosopher's stone. According to the account he has left us, and which has not failed to be quoted by all the opponents of Paracelsus, the philosopher and physician spent whole nights in public houses amongst the lowest dregs of the people, not taking off his clothes for weeks together even when he did go to bed, such was his habitual intoxication. Often, too, he would rise in the middle of the night, in a state that might well be called rabid, hacking and hewing about him with his long sword, which on such occasions never left him, and which he boasted to have got from the common executioner. Poor Oporinus honestly confesses that in the acting of these antics he frequently trembled for his life, as well he might, if the story be as he tells it. How his patients and pupils endured the doctor is the wonder, for it seems he had not the better part of drunkenness, which like the better part of valour is discretion, but would attend both the sick and the lecture-room when in a

* *Erster Theil der Bücher und Schriften des P. T. Paracelsus.*—p. 142. Qrto. Basel.

† Oporin, or Oporinus, was a learned printer of Bale, who, like the more celebrated Stephens, wrote as well as printed, and in his day had some reputation for scholarship.

complete state of inebriety; nay it was his custom, if he could persuade them to it, to make his invalids partake of these orgies, that he might cure them, as he said, upon a full stomach, a practice that probably did not seem quite so outrageous in those times of hard living as it might in the present day. Many instances are related of the easy impudence with which he treated those who invoked his medical aid, and the following, given by Sprengel, is not the least pointed. He tells us, that Paracelsus upon one occasion, after a night of debauchery, being called in to a patient, he went as usual, unconscious of his situation, or indifferent to it, when the first question he asked on entering the room was, whether the sick person had taken anything of late. "Nothing," was the reply, "except the sacrament." Hereupon our Doctor turned upon his heel, exclaiming, "then you don't want me, you have got another physician." But this levity of speech ill accords with his general professions, for though he was accused of Arianism and of being a contemner of church mysteries, yet he made religion the basis of all art, insisting repeatedly as he does in the OCCULT PHILOSOPHY, "that the foundation of these and all other arts be laid in the holy Scriptures, upon the doctrine and faith of Christ, which is the most firm and sure foundation, and the chiefe corner-stone, whereupon the three points of this philosophy are grounded."* To be sure this mixing up of religion with every thing did not save him from the censure of his adversaries. It was contended that many of his dogmas were impious, and amongst other things, Sennert makes it the ground of heavy accusation against him, that he maintained homunculi might be generated by chemical means only, and that the giants and pigmies of other days had been

* Paracelsus of the Supreme Mysteries of Nature—Prologue—By R. Turner. 1655.

so called into existence, with a knowledge of things far beyond that of ordinary men. Erastus is even worse, and marshals in array seven distinct dogmas, which he pronounces blasphemous.*

He now quarrelled with the magistrates of Bale, who had decided against him in a cause, which he had instituted upon a patient's refusing to pay the fee demanded for curing him of the gout. In consequence of his libels against his judges he was obliged to fly, and for years after led a wandering life, being now settled for a short time in one place, and now in another. His fame, however, visibly declined, and his hitherto faithful followers began to fall off, a circumstance which was not forgotten by his enemies in their attacks upon him. To these he cavalierly replied, "complaints have been made by some of my runaway servants and pupils, that none of them could stay with me on account of my odd ways. Now mark my answer. The hangman has taken to himself one and twenty of my flock, and helped them off to the other world—Heaven speed them all—how can a man remain with me if the hangman will not let him? Or what have my odd ways done to them? if they had avoided the hangman's ways, that would have been the true art." †

* Erasti Disp. p. 144, et seq.

† Weiter ist auch ein klag ab mir| von meinen verlassnen knechten etlichs theils| und Discipulis auch etlichs theils| das ihr keiner meiner wunderlicher weiss halben kön bey mir bleibē. Da merckent mein antwort. Der Hencker hat mir zu seinen gnaden genommen ein und zwenzig Knecht| und von diser Welt abgethan| Gott helff ihn allen. Wie kan einer bey mir bleiben| so in der Hencker nicht bey mir lassen will? oder was hatt ihnen mein wunderliche weiss gethan? hetten sie den Hencker sein weiss geflohen| wer die rechte kunst gewesen. *Erster Theil der Bücher und Schriften des P. T. Bombast von Hohenhein, Paracelsi genannt*, p. 143. Basel. 1589.

In the same strain he goes on through pages, inveighing alike against doctors, barber-surgeons, apothecaries, and pupils, all of whom filch his secrets, get possession of his patients, and then complain of his strange humours; upon which he reasonably enough asks, "solt das ein Lamb machen?—is that likely to make a lamb of one?" —We should think not; but the doctors of the present day can best answer the question.

Of the remainder of his life we know little, except that it was spent in constant strife with his enemies, whose numbers appear to have increased with his declining reputation. Nor was their enmity confined to words alone, a coin in which our doctor was fully able to repay them, for it seems highly probable that he met with a violent end. Sennert, whom I have so often referred to, and who, though very little known, is full of curious matter, but in an antique garb, notices a report which emanated from Crollius,* of his enemies having taken him off by poison; he adds, however, that the belief rests upon no sufficient testimony, and that it was much more probable Paracelsus died of drunkenness and gluttony,† from which assumed premises he draws the very ingenious inference, that he could hardly have possessed the philosopher's stone, since he was unable to cure himself. He adds too, we know not upon what authority, that for many years before his decease, Paracelsus remained convulsed and contracted, and finally died at the early age of forty-seven. Sprengel, however, gives from Hessling another version of his death; he says that our philosopher being at a banquet, the servants and other ruffians in the employ of his medical enemies hurled him down from a

* Crollius followed close in the footsteps of Paracelsus, and wrote "Four Tractates on Philosophy Reformed and Improved." I have never seen this work except in Pinnell's translation, London, 1657.

† D. Sennerti Opera, p. 192. Fol. Lugduni, 1676.

height and broke his neck. In confirmation of this, he observes that Sömmering found a deep breach in the left temporal bone of Paracelsus, which had penetrated to the bottom of the skull. But who shall say at what time the skull received this damage? it might have been by some accident long after the flesh had mouldered from the bones.

Another report is, that he died in St. Stephen's Hospital at Salzburg, in the year 1541, which would make him forty-eight, instead of forty-seven, at the time of his death, as asserted by Sennert.

It is no easy matter to understand either the medical, or the philosophical theories of Paracelsus, partly from his tendency to mysticism, and partly because he chose to give new meanings to old words, so that his works in fact require a peculiar glossary of their own. Take for instance the following. According to his notions, every natural body has a superlunar type or model, after which it has been formed, and the knowledge of this ideal he called, by a strange perversion of terms, *Anatomy*. In like manner he explains *astrum* to be the innate or essential power residing in anything, and defines *alchemy* as the art of drawing out the *astrum* from the metals. And more there is of the same kind, for the repetition of which our readers would give us few thanks.

The first article of his medical and philosophical creed appears to be, so far as we can understand him, that books are of no use, but that physicians must be inspired by heaven, and perfected by practice.* His so-called *Emanation System* supposes an original man flowing from the Godhead, in whom, through whom, and by whom all things are; it seems to have been much the same as the *Pleroma* of the Gnostics and Arians. It was based upon the general harmony of all things in nature, more par-

* *Von Französischen Blattern*, S. 501.

ticularly upon the accordance of the stars with sublunary objects. The Platonic idea of all things below having been formed after the model of things above was no doubt the origin of his system, but the transition was easy enough, to an enthusiast, from such a notion to that of the models themselves actually existing in the sublunary creations. Hence, as Sprengel well observes, his constant comparison of all earthly bodies with the firmament and the universe, for in them all the parts of our form are continued, not actually, but virtually and spiritually. As a philosopher, the physician recognizes the lower spheres, or the existence of the heavenly intelligences in sublunary matter; as an astronomer he recognizes the upper spheres,—that is, he discovers the limbs of the human body in the firmament. Every thing that happens on earth, has previously happened above; and in sleep, heaven reveals to man the mysteries of the Cabbala, without a knowledge of which no one can pretend to be a physician. The first man, Adam, was intimately acquainted with it, and hence he knew the signs of all things, and gave to animals their most appropriate names. A principal dogma of this Cabbalistic system was Pantheism.

The whole physiological theory of Paracelsus consisted for the most part in the application of the Cabbala* to the explaining of the functions of the body, and here again we have the harmony of single parts with the heavenly intelligences. Yet he does not altogether mean us to understand an original connection between the stars and the human *form*; neither the creation of man,

* The HEBREW Cabbala signifies tradition; the ARTIFICIAL consists in searching for abstruse significations of any word, or words in Scripture; and the CHRISTIAN implies a species of magic. It is to the second of these that Paracelsus most frequently alludes, either as a means of knowledge, or for the purpose of controuling the spirits.

nor his properties result from the stars, and therefore we must not say, "man takes after Mars, but rather that Mars takes after man, for man is more than Mars and all the planets." He adds too in his usual contradictory manner, "although there were no stars man would still be what he is;" while at the same time he would have us believe that the vital power in human beings is an emanation from the stars, and originates in the air. Thus the sun is connected with the heart, the moon with the brain, Jupiter with the liver, Saturn with the spleen, Mercury with the lungs, Mars with the gall, and Venus with the loins.† In another part he thus determines the places of the planets: the sun has influence over the navel and the centre of the belly; the moon, over the chine; Mercury, over the intestines; Mars, over the face; Jupiter, over the head; Saturn over the extremities. The pulse also is nothing else than the measure of the body's temperature after the manner of the six places held by the planets. Thus, two pulses under the feet belong to Saturn and Jupiter; two in the neck, to Mercury and Venus; two in the temples, to the Moon and Mercury; and the pulse connected with the Sun is below the heart. The macrocosm, or great world, has its seven pulses, described by the course of the planets, as their cessation is signified by the eclipses. In the macrocosm the influence of the Moon and Saturn is shown in the freezing of water, just as the microcosmic moon, the brain, coagulates the blood. Hence, people of a melancholy temperament, whom Paracelsus chooses to call lunatic, have thick blood. Above all, he will not allow us to talk of a man's having this or that complexion, but we must say, "that is Mars, or that is Venus." So too must the physician know the planets of the microcosm; the meri-

† And also with *ra αἰδοῖα*.

dian, the zodiac, his east and west, before he can explain the functions, or heal the diseases of the body; the meaning of which jargon is that he considers the different parts of the microcosm, i.e. the little world of man, as bearing a relation to the planetary world. He then goes on to tell us what is learnt by a constant comparison of the microcosm, and macrocosm, the great advantage of this study being that the scholar needs no preparation, but may dispense with the wicked Greek and Latin-grammars.

The human body he held to consist of two parts—the material, and the astral, or spiritual,—a favourite creed with men like Paracelsus, since it enables them to explain the whole theory of apparitions. According to this creed, the spirit and the soul are two very different things, the spirit, he tells us, being "the soul of the soul, as the soul is the spirit of the body."* But it would weary the reader, were we to attempt analyzing the whole body of his medical and philosophical system, while a few of his doctrines will serve to show, not only his own character, but in a great measure the character of the age wherein he lived.

Of Crooked People. This is a subject, on which Paracelsus is very much in earnest. Deformed people, he argues, are monsters, and as they could not have been made after God's image, they must have been manufactured by the devil. "Moreover," he says, "you must know that God abhors these kind of monsters, and that they are displeasing to him, and that none of them can be saved, seeing that they bear not the image of God; whence wee can conjecture nothing else, but that they are so formed by the devil, and are made for the devill's service, because no good work was ever done by a monster,

* De Pestil. Tractatus Primus.

but rather all manner of evill, wickednesse, and devilish deceits. For as an executioner marketh his sons in cutting off their ears, putting out their eyes, burning their cheeks, fingers, hands, and cutting off their heads, so doth the devil mark his sons through the imagination of their mothers. Also all men are to be shunned, which abound with, or want any member, or have a double member. For that is a presage of the devill's and a most certaine signe of some occult wickedness and deceit, which follows upon it. Wherefore they seldom die without the executioner, or at least from some marke made by him."*

Gnomes, spirits, &c. Under this head, our learned doctor informs us with becoming gravity, "under the earth do wander half-men, which possess all temporal things, which they want, or are delighted with. They are vulgarly called gnomes, or inhabitants of the mountains; but by their proper names they are called Sylphes or Pigmies. They are not spirits as others are, but are compared unto them for the similitude of their arts and industry, which are common to them with the spirits. They have flesh and blood as men, which no real spirit hath."† He then goes on to tell how these gnomes sometimes plague the miners, and at others, being of a capricious nature, do them good service, or warn them thrice by knocking in the same place. This is a sure sign that the miner, who is working there will be destroyed by the falling in of the earth, or some such accident.

According to the general notion, the devil is a wealthy personage, and gives good wages. But this Paracelsus stoutly denies, maintaining that "the devil is the poorest of all creatures, so that there is no creature so miser-

* Paracelsus on "*The Nature of Things*," p. 8. Eng. trans.
† Paracelsus of "*Occult Philosophy*," p. 52.

able and poore, above or under the earth, or in all the other elements. Neither hath he any money or riches, nor doth he take, or require any bonds from men sealed in their blood. But there are other spirits, which do such things, such as the Sylphes or Pygmies." Unfortunately this useful class of acquaintance is lost to us; they have all gone somehow, and somewhere, but how, or where even our Doctor can not surmise. He says, however, that "the mountain of Venus,* in Italy, was much possessed with these spirits, for Venus herself was a nymph, and that mountain was by a comparison, as her kingdome and paradise; but she is dead whereby her kingdome ceaseth to be. But where, or in what place is there any mention heard to be made of them as in former time, when Danhauserus and many others entered in unto them? Neither did they invent these fables; they were of such a nature and condition that they loved all men who loved them, and hated them that hated them. Wherefore they gave arts and riches in abundance to them, who prescribed and bound themselves to them, and they know both our minds and thoughts, whereby it comes to pass that they are easily moved by us, to come to us."† Paracelsus, however, does not recommend his friends to have any thing to do with such dangerous characters notwithstanding their amiability; he mentions these facts only as a point of natural history that people may learn to distinguish between the devil and these semi-homines, and not in Hamlet's phrase, mistake "a hawk for a handsaw," for, in addition to the other differences pointed out, the gentleman in black has no body, unless when he bor-

* This "Mountain of Venus" is often mentioned by the dealers in the supernatural. Tieck in his tale of the "Faithful Eckhart," places him there as a monitor to warn people off such dangerous premises.

† Paracelsus of "*Occult Philosophy*," Eng. trans. p. 57.

rows one for the nonce from the four elements; neither does he die, whereas the Pygmies are clearly subject to the rules of mortality. Still it is advisable to be cautious how you enter into any contract with such a capricious and despotic race, who have a wonderful fancy for twisting the necks of any one that presumes to thwart them. Men have often been found in this plight, whence ignorant people, knowing nothing of the Pygmies, have laid all the blame upon the devil, though, if he had the inclination, he has not the power to do any thing of the kind. Paracelsus was at least original in his doctrines, and indeed one part of his system consisted in asserting the direct contrary to what was generally believed. If in the common opinion any object was black, he would maintain that it was white, which love for contradicting others is the less to be wondered at as we find him perpetually contradicting himself.

Treasure-seeking.— It appears that there are two sorts of hidden treasures, gold namely,—that "is made, coyned, and hid by the nymphes and Sylphes,—"* which he says is very hard to be got at, and metals in their natural state, which are to be found by proceeding as follows:—"first under an influence of the Moone, or Saturne, and when the moon transits Taurus, Capricorne, or Virgo, is a good time to begin to seeke or digge after treasures. Neither need you use any other ceremonies, nor to draw any other circles, or to use any inchantments whatsoever; onely those that dig must be of a cheerful minde, free and alienated from any evil thoughts and cogitations, and not to be moved, nor feare any phantasies, visions, or imaginations of the spirits; although they should corporally appeare yet they are onely visions. Therefore those that dig ought to discourse, sing, and be cheereful, and not to be affrighted by anything, but to have a

* *Occult Philosophy*, p. 66.

good courage; and by no means soever let them keepe silence as some perfidious negromancers have taught.

"Now when they come neere to the place where the treasure is that it is almost detected, and do heare many noises, and strange visions and horrible sights are seene, which oftentimes happens to be, it sheweth that the Pygmies and Sylphes are there, who do envy that men should have those treasures, and will not willingly part from them, especially if it be their own, or such as they brought thither. Such treasures are to be left, if the keepers thereof consent not. And although they may be gotten and taken away as a robbery from those keepers, yet they have an art whereby they can change these treasures, in this way gained, into a vile and base matter, as into earth, clay, dung, and such like things as I have seene by examples."* A better mode of keeping people honest than this of the Sylphs could hardly have been devised, for who would steal, when the booty was to be so profitless?

Of Tempests.—"The orginal of tempests is certainly nothing else but the appearance of spirits; and lightning, or coruscation, preceding the presence of them; whereby it may be certainly known whether those tempests will pass away with or without danger; and that after this manner is to be understood; to wit, as a stranger will not enter into any one's house, unless first he speake, so these spirits do not appear unto us without speaking first. But their voice is thunder, which as we see, immediately follows every flash of lightning. The ringing of bells do availe nothing in these cases, although I do not reject them, especially in such tempests as are caused by magicians' enchantments, by reason of the spirits by them raised in the air. For the spirits do love silence and quietness, whereby it comes to pass that grate noises,

* *Occult Philosophy*, p. 66.

as the sounds of bells and trumpets do partly diminish of and disperse tempests by them stirred up. But in thunders and haile they do no good, as the monks and sacrificers have to their loss too often found. And for this cause they used ceremonies, wherewith they seduced the vulgar and common people, persuading them that besprinkling places with holy water, as they call it, preserved them safe from thunder and haile; likewise by burning holy candles, or some palme, or other herb by them sanctified, or with the perfume of frankincense, or myrrhe of these sacrificers they were preserved secure."

Great is the indignation of our philosopher at such monkish tricks, for he had no faith in priests, whatever he might have in old women, and he argues reasonably enough that if these sacrificers wished to drive away the spirits they should use assafœtida and not sweet perfumes. But he has a more effectual remedy—"note," he says "that to place a preservative in the centre of a house, garden, or a field, avayleth not at all;" it must be placed at the four angles, east, west, north, and south, upon the very obvious principle, that it is safer to stand upon four legs than two, and these said legs or pillars are to be of "mugwort, St. John's wort, perriwinkle, celandine, rue, and many such herbs and roots, especially if they be gathered under the right influence, for that is a main point. Yet better even than these are coral and azoth."*

Evestrum and Trarames.—The "*Evestrum*, or Evester, according to its essence is either mortal or immortal. It is a thing like a shadow on a wall. The shadow riseth and waxeth greater as the body doth, and continueth with it even unto its last matter. The Evestrum takes its beginning at the first generation of everything animate and inanimate, sensible and insensible, and whatsoever

* The *azoth*, I take it, is the *azure-stone*, or *lazurstone*, more commonly called *Lapis Lazuli*.

casteth a shadow, all of them have their Evester. *Trarames* is the shadow of an invisible essence. It springeth up with the reason and imagination of intelligent and brute creatures. The Evester maketh to prophecy; Trarames giveth sharpnesse of wit. To foretell what shall befall a man, beast, tree, &c., is by the shadowy Evester; but the reason why it should be so is from the Trarame. Some Evesters have a beginning, some have not. Such as have a beginning may be dissolved, with the surviving eternal."—And much more there is to the same purpose, but as this sort of intellectual food is somewhat hard and indigestible, it is as well not to indulge too much in it.

It may be supposed that Paracelsus could not broach these wonderful mysteries, without impertinent enquiries being made as to where he got his knowledge. To all such carpers he replies by putting in his turn divers pithy questions, which, if his data were only true, would be sufficiently ingenious. In the tone of a man who feels he has the best of the argument, he demands, "which of your authors or writers taught the bear, when his sight is dimmed by reason of the abundance and superfluity of his blood, to go to a stall of bees, which by their stinging him pierce his skin, and cause an effusion of the superfluous blood? what physician prescribed the herb, dittany, to be a medicine for the hart? or who taught the serpent the virtue of briony and dragon-wort? who taught the dog to take grass for his cordial and purge? and who prescribed the salt-sea-water to the stork?"—As Shakspeare's clown says, "I hope here be truths," and with them I leave Paracelsus *to the judgment* of my readers.

LES GRANDS JOURS.

The Grands Jours were a sort of special criminal assizes of two kinds, the one Royal, the other, Signioral; but the latter, though so similar in name, appear to have been very different in their uses from those ordered by the monarch, of which indeed they are but an imitation. They were established, in virtue of an ordinance of Roussillon, which forbids the nobles to have two classes of jurisdiction in the same place, and there was a power of appeal from them to the parliament. The right of holding these Signioral courts was also accorded in ancient days by the king to the princes of the blood royal, and sometimes in virtue of a special authority to that effect they were constituted courts of final judgment.

The Royal Grands Jours date from the early times of the French monarchy; they were ordinary, but sovereign, tribunals, established by the kings in the form of solemn and especial sessions, and over which they themselves presided to pronounce definitive judgment in all criminal, as well as civil, cases. Under the monarchs of the first and second race, they were composed of a certain number of persons chosen and deputed by the sovereign, much

as the commissioners, called *Missi Dominici.** These judges were sent into the remote provinces to enquire into the conduct of the dukes, counts, and other principal nobles, to receive any complaints made against them, and to reform whatever abuses had crept into the administration of justice or the finances, to the detriment of the public weal. They used formerly to be held at stated periods, and in some respects they bore a resemblance to the assizes. The object of both was the same, but they differed essentially in the extent of their power, the Grands Jours pronouncing judgment without appeal, in addition to which, while the assizes were each attached to its particular jurisdiction, the former, as we have already seen, were an extraordinary tribunal, without any fixed establishment, and were constituted by letters patent submitted to the form of registration.

We find it recorded of Louis XII. that he revived them to repress the continued attacks of the nobles upon his authority, commanding by an especial ordinance that they should be held once a year in all the towns and villages where it previously had been the custom to establish them. In a short time however they would

* There appears to have been no difference in the judicial powers of the two, the "Missi Dominici," or *Royal Commissioners*, being of the same class and having the same objects as the nobles and men of influence deputed to hold the Grands Jours. Du Cange tells us that the *Missi Dominici* were sent "ut in comitum et judicum pravitates inquirerent," that they should enquire into the corruptions of the magistrates and judges—"in ipsos etiam episcopos et abbates inquirebant," they looked after the bishops and abbots—"curabant ut provinciæ latronibus ac prædatoribus purgarentur," they took care that the provinces should be cleared from thieves and robbers—and finally "seligebantur ex ditioribus et honoratioribus palatii, ne si pauperiores essent, muneribus corrumperentur," they were chosen from the richest and most respected of the court, lest if they were poor they should be corrupted by presents.

seem to have fallen again into disuse, the last that were ever held being at Clermont for Auvergne in the end of the year 1665 and the commencement of the year 1666, as also at Limoges for Limousin in 1668, and at Puy-en-Velay for Languedoc. About this period the wars both civil and foreign, which had for thirty years before desolated France, had produced a general state of license wherein the strong universally plundered and oppressed the weak. This evil was not a little aggravated by the marauding habits of the nobles, the difficulty of getting at offenders from the universal absence of good roads, and the general want of strength in the government. The laws were thus in many places reduced to a dead letter, and the most frightful disorder reigned in every department, but more particularly in Auvergne, which being remote from the central power of government could get little aid from the provincial judges. With them bribery and the influence of rank or connexions were unbounded, and under the circumstances just mentioned they might be well called devoid of all responsibility. To such a height had this evil attained, that Louis XIV. at length resolved to interfere, and on the thirty-first of August, 1665, he established a sitting of the Grands Jours at Clermont in Auvergne. The account of their proceedings we owe to the Abbe Flechier, afterwards Bishop of Nismes, who accompanied one of the members, M. de Caumartin, in the capacity of tutor to his son, from whom the father was unwilling to be separated. According to the details afforded by him, this tremendous tribunal struck a wholesome terror into offenders, many of whom preferred being convicted of contumacy to awaiting the probable results of its judgment. Nor had they who remained and appeared any great cause to rejoice in the wisdom of their election. Punishments of all kinds were dealt out with an unsparing hand, and the executions even were

numerous, proving plainly enough that the social ulcer was both deep and dangerous. But amidst these details we have others of a less gloomy nature, the Abbe amusing himself mightily with the gossip of the town and the awkward manners of the provincials. "When the ladies of the city," says the author of the *Abstract*, "came to visit the commissioners, the Abbe Flechier, who observed every thing with inquisitive eyes, was present, and the manner in which he paints this scene, so novel to him, is exceedingly pleasant. The ladies arrived in troops that they might keep each other in countenance and be less remarked. Their manner of presenting themselves, their awkward and confused air, their arms hanging straight down, or crossed immovably upon the bosom, their costume in which the fashions of the day were carried to excess, as is the habit of provincials when they plume themselves on dressing well, the affectation of standing in a circle, according to the rank of their husbands, or the date of their marriage; nothing, in short that can complete the picture of perfect absurdity, escapes his observation." Much more there is to the same effect—how the judges gave balls to the ladies, or accompanied them to the theatre, in the evening, and the next morning dealt out justice upon all offenders—how the prisons were full and the condemnations numerous—and how the alarm reached its height when instead of confining themselves, as had been expected, to lay criminals, the judges set about reforming the clergy, and rectifying the abuses that had crept into the chapters and monasteries of both sexes. But even the epitome of these things is much too long for our purpose, and the reader therefore is referred to the works of Flechier himself.

THE MONTHS—APRIL.

Writers are by no means agreed in their derivation of the Latin name assigned to this month. Ovid stoutly maintains that it was called *April* from the Greek name of Venus, Ἀφροδίτη, the deity having been born of ἀφρὸν, *i. e.* the sea-foam.* At the same time he notices, although with the contempt becoming a descendant of Venus, that there were some who endeavoured to rob the goddess of her just rights by deriving the month from *aperire*, to open, because at this season the spring uncloses everything, and the prolific earth is open to receive the seeds.† Macrobius gives us a variety of derivations for the word. First he says that as Romulus called the first month of the year March after his father, Mars, so he named the second month April, in honour of the mother of Æneas; but he admits that some have imagined the founder of Rome to have been influenced by other and more ab-

* "Sed Veneris mensem Graio sermone notatum
Auguror; a spumis est Dea dicta maris.
Nec tibi sit mirum Graio rem nomine dici,
Itala nam tellus Grecia major erat."
P. Ovidii Nasonis Fastorum, lib. iv., v. 61.

† "Quo non livor abiit? sunt qui tibi mensis honorem
Eripuisse velint, invideantque, Venus.
Nam quia Ver aperit tunc omnia, densaque cedit
Frigoris asperitas, fœtaque terra patet,
Aprilem memorant ab aperto tempore dictum,
Quem Venus injectâ vindicat alma manu."
P. Ovid. Nas. Fast., lib. iv., v. 85—90.

stract considerations, and that as he had given March to the slayer of mankind, so he appropriated April to Venus, that her gentleness might temper his ferocity.* Scaliger, however, denies the authority both of Ovid and Macrobius, and oddly enough chooses to derive April from *aper*, a wild boar, asserting that the Romans in this only imitated the Greeks, who called February ἐλαφηβολίων, from the striking of deer, which were then immolated to Diana. If it were allowable to form one's own opinion where such high authorities differ from each other, I should be inclined to adopt the conjecture so angrily set aside by

* "Secundum mensem nominavit Aprilem, ut quidam putant cum aspiratione, quasi Aphrilem, a spumâ, quam Græci ἀφρὸν vocant, unde orta Venus creditur. Et hanc Romuli fuisse asserunt rationem, ut primum quidem mensem a patre suo, Marte, secundum ab Æneæ matre Venere nominaret; et hi potissimum anni principia servarent, a quibus esset Romani nominis origo; cum hodie quoque in sacris Martem patrem, Venerem genetricem vocemus. Alii putant Romulum, vel altiore prudentiâ, vel certi numinis providentiâ, ita primos ordinasse menses, ut cum præcedens Marti esset dicatus, Deo plerumque hominum necatori, ut Homerus ait, naturæ conscius,—Ἄρες, Ἄρες βροτολοιγὲ, μιαιφόνε, τειχεσιπλητα—secundus Veneri dicaretur quæ vim ejus quasi benefica leniret."—Aur. Macrobii Saturnaliorum, lib. i., p. 256, 8vo. Bipont, 1788.—"The second month he called April, as some think with an aspiration, as if Aphril, from the foam, which the Greeks call ἀφρὸν, whence Venus is believed to have sprung. And this they assert to have been Romulus' reason; that, as he named the first month from his father, Mars, so he would name the second from Venus, the mother of Æneas; and that these two should chiefly possess the commencement of the year, from whom was the origin of the Roman name; thus even in the present day we invoke in the sacred rites Mars the father and Venus the mother. Others think it was either from a deeper wisdom, or by some divine providence, Romulus thus ordained the months, that as the preceding one had been dedicated to Mars, the general destroyer of men, as Homer says—

'Mars! Mars! thou homicidal, sanguinary, shaker of walls!'

so the second should be dedicated to Venus as if by her gentleness to temper his violence."

Ovid. The deriving of Aprilis from *aperio*—of the name of the season from its principal characteristic—has at least a great show of probability. It is to this opinion also that Macrobius inclines, telling us from Cincius and Varro, that the ancient Romans had instituted no particular festival to Venus in April, and how therefore could it have derived its name from her? He then winds up all from the same authority by saying, "prior to the Vernal Equinox, the skies were clouded, the earth covered with snow, and the rivers closed by ice, all of which became dispersed and broken up by spring, and therefore the month took its name from this general opening up as it were of nature, the trees budding, the streams flowing, and earth disclosing its bosom to receive the seeds."*

The same uncertainty seems to prevail in regard to the etymology of the Saxon term for this month, *Oster*, or *Oster Monat*. Verstegan says, "they, (the Saxons) called April by the name of Oster-Monat, some think of a goddess, called Goster, whereof I see no great reason, for if it took appellation of such a goddess, a supposed cause of the easterly winds, it seemeth to be somewhat by some miswritten, and should rightly be Oster, and not Goster. The winds indeed by ancient observation were found in this month most commonly to blow from the East, and East in the Teutonic is Ost; and Ost-End, which rightly in English is East End, hath that name for the Eastern situation thereof, as to the ships it appeareth, which through the narrow seas do come from the West."†

Where Verstegan picked up his GOSTER, is more than I can pretend to say. The G and E being extremely alike in the old black letter, it is possible he may have mis-

* Aur. Macrobie Saturnaliorum, lib. i. cap. xii. p. 257. Varro maintains that neither the Latin nor Greek name of Venus was known amongst the early Romans.

† Verstegan, p. 66, 12mo. London, 1675.

taken the one for the other and thus have built up his whole theory upon a palpable blunder, for *Eoster*, or *Eastre*, is the usual way, in which the name of the goddess is written. True it is, if we may believe Spelman, that, in some old edition of Bede, *Coster* is read, and not Eoster; but this certainly is not the general reading of the editions of that author, and I should imagine it is, like the Goster of Verstegan, nothing more than a mere typographical blunder. In the copy now before me * the text is plain enough,—"Eosturmonath, qui nunc Paschalis mensis interpretatur, quondam a Deâ illorum, quæ Eostre vocabatur, et cui in illo festa celebrabant, nomen habuit" —that is, "Eosturmonath, which is now interpreted to mean the paschal month, formerly had its name from one of their goddesses (*i. e.* Saxon goddesses) who was called Eostre, and to whom in that month they celebrated festivals."

Every thing now denotes the vivifying influence of spring. The birds that had left us during the winter-season begin to return, the woods are alive with their cheerful notes, and the process of nidification commences. The lesser pettychaps, who is the smallest of the willow-wrens, and the wood-wren, the largest of the same tribe, are now seen upon the wing; the bittern begins to boom † in marshy places at even-tide, and the heron sails heavily from one pond to another in search of fish, over

* Venerabilis Bedæ Opera, vol. ii. p. 68. Folio. Col. Agrippinæ.

† According to some authorities the bittern begins this *booming*, *lowing*, or *bumping*, as it is variously called, so early as March, or even February, but it always ceases after the breeding season. It is at morning and evening that the bird makes this deep, lowing sound, and often while high in the air, its flight being lofty and spiral. "Those," says Lord Montague, "who have walked in a summer's evening by the sedgy sides of unfrequented rivers, must remember a variety of notes from different water-fowl; the loud scream of the wild goose, the croaking of the mallard, the whining of the

a large extent of country; the swallows make their appearance, though not in numbers; the wryneck comes back from its winter residence; the nightingale pours forth her song, which whether it be sad or cheerful the poets have not yet been able to decide, Milton,* Virgil,

lapwing, and the tremulous neighing of the jack-snipe. But of all these sounds there is none so dismally hollow as the booming of the bittern. It is impossible for words to give those, who have not heard this evening call, an adequate idea of its solemnity. It is like the interrupted bellowing of a bull, but hollower and louder, and is heard at a mile's distance, as if issuing from some formidable being that resided at the bottom of the waters. From the loudness and solemnity of the note, many have been led to suppose that the bird made use of some external instrument to produce it, and that so small a body could never eject such a quantity of tone. The common people are of opinion that it thrusts its bill into a reed, that serves as a pipe for swelling the note above its natural pitch, while others imagine that the bittern puts its head under water, and then by blowing violently produces its boomings. The fact is that the bird is sufficiently provided by nature for this call, and it is often heard when there are neither reeds nor water to assist its sonorous invitations. It hides in the sedges by day, and begins to call in the evening, booming six or eight times, and then discontinuing for ten or twenty minutes it resumes the same sound."

* Milton, as most readers will recollect, thus addresses the nightingale;

"Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, *most melancholy!*
Thee, chantress, oft the woods among,
I woo to hear thy evening song."—*Il Penseroso.*

Virgil uses the melancholy of the nightingale in an exquisite simile to express the grief of Eurydice for Orpheus;

"Qualis populeâ *mœrens* Philomela sub umbrâ
Amissos queritur fœtus."—*Georg. Lib. iv. v.* 511.

To be sure in this case the nightingale is supposed to have lost her young, which may account for her sadness without any general disposition to melancholy.

And Petrarca, in a sonnet written after the death of Laura, says;

"Quel Rossignol, che si soave piagne
Fórse suòi figli, o sua cara cónsòrte,

and Petrarch being staunch advocates for the first opinion, while Coleridge insists upon it that her notes are any thing but melancholy; however this may be, it is requisite to mention in correction of a very common error that the song of the nightingale is not confined to the evening; the bird about the middle of this month sings both early

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Di dolcezza empie il cièlo e le campagne
Con tante nòte sì pictóse e scorte."—Sonnetto lxxiv.

"The nightingale that oft so sweetly grieves
Perchance her young, or fondly cherish'd mate,
Whose notes harmonious breathe at Heav'n's gate
Whilst earth responds the woe her bosom heaves."

S. Woollaston.

On the other hand, Chaucer calls the nightingale's song merry; and Coleridge is eloquent upon the same side of the question.

"All is still!
A balmy night, and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark! the nightingale begins its song,
'Most musical, most melancholy' bird!—
A melancholy bird? O, idle thought!
In nature there is nothing melancholy;
But some night-wandering man, whose heart was pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
And so, poor wretch, filled all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrows;—he and such as he,
First nam'd these notes a melancholy strain;
And many a poet echoes the conceit;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still,
Full of meek sympathy, must heave those sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.
My friend, and my friend's sister, we have learnt
A different lore; we may not thus profane

and late throughout the day. Nor is our Fauna yet exhausted. The red-breast, the throstle, the storm-cock, the blackbird, and the black-cap, join in the general harmony. The cuckoo also, though he sometimes appears towards the end of March, may also be set down as belonging to the middle of April; according to the old Devonshire rhymes,

"In the month of April
He opens his bill;
In the month of May
He singeth all day;
In the month of June
He alters his tune;
In the month of July
Away he doth fly."*

In Norfolk they have a sort of rhyming proverb much to the same purpose, but making the bird's sojourn with us a month later;

* In April,
The cuckoo shows his bill;
In May,
He sings both night and day;
In June,
He changeth his tune;
In July,
Away he fly;
In August,
Away he must.†

In addition to these, partridges are still heard by night;

Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance. 'Tis the *merry* nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates,
With fast, thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music."

* Bray's "Borders of the Tamar and the Tavy."

† Forster's *Perennial Calendar*, p. 182; but I have taken the liberty

the bat makes his appearance; and that singular little creature, the mole-cricket, utters its low, dull, jarring note, continued for a long time without intermission, like the chattering of the fern-owl. It inhabits the sides of canals, and swampy wet soils, in which just below the surface it forms long winding burrows and a chamber neatly smoothed and rounded, of the size of a moderate snuff-box, in which about the middle of May it deposits its eggs to the number of nearly a hundred. The ridges which this insect raises in its subterraneous progress interrupt the evenness of gravel walks; and the havoc it commits in beds of young cabbages, legumes, and flowers, renders it a very unwelcome guest in a garden.* Still less pleasant visitors about this time are the snakes, snails, earth-worms and beetles.

The Flora of April is equally extensive with the Fauna. Among the principal ornaments of the season are the *crown-imperial;* the *chequered daffodil;* the *wall-flower,* which, where the plant is old, now begins to blow and continues in flower during the early part of summer, though the younger specimens do not blow till May; and the *garden-hyacinth,* and the *oriental narcissus* which are seen in blossom out of doors. *Daffodils* also, *jonquils,* the *early sweet-scented tulip,* and the *anemone* begin to

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of arranging the verse somewhat differently, and more in accordance with the rhymes. He also gives some curious old lines from Heywood in regard to this bird—

"In April, the Coocoo can sing her song by rote;
In June, of tune she can not sing a note;
At first, koo-coo, koo-coo, still can she do;
At last, kooke, kooke, kooke; six kookes to one koo."

The same authority—that is, Forster—informs us "the cuckoo begins early in the season with the interval of a minor third; the bird then proceeds to a major third; next to a fourth, then to a fifth, after which his voice breaks out without attaining a minor sixth."

* Vide Forster's Perennial Calendar, p. 198.

flower, while the *crowsfeet* multiply on all sides, and the *dandelion* almost turns the meadows into a field of yellow; the *ladies' smock* too and the *speedwell* are also abundant; and the early flowers, such as the *violet* and the *heart's ease*, still continue in full profusion; but the *snow-drop* has disappeared, and in its place we have the *snow-flake*, the graceful *cowslip*, and in less abundance the *bulbous crowfoot*, to be soon followed by the *harebell*, that loves the sides of fields, sloping banks, and shady places, which it renders quite blue with its flowers. Not less beautiful are the trees at this season. The *laurel*, *almond*, *peach*, *apricot*, *nectarine*, *cherry*, and many other fruit-trees blossom on all sides, while the *beech*, the *horse-chestnut*, the *elm*, and the *larch* open their leaves, and are clothed in a light but glowing green, that in its repose is to the full as pleasing to the eye as the gaudiest of the flowers.

Such was April, though of late years it has hardly deserved so fair a character, having like some other folks grown worse as it has grown older. In proportion as winter has been less severe with us, spring and summer have deteriorated, as if nature required the bracing colds of winter to restore her strength after the teeming of the two preceding seasons.

All Fool's Day.—The custom of making April fools on the first day of this month is exceedingly old as well as general. Both Maurice and Colonel Pearce have shown that it prevailed in India, and the latter says, that it forms a part of the *Huli Festival.*—"During the *Huli*, when mirth and festivity reign among the Hindoos of every class, one subject of diversion is to send people on errands and expeditions that are to end in disappointment, and raise a laugh at the expense of the person sent. The Huli is always in March, and the last day is the general holiday. I have never yet heard any account of the origin of this

English custom; but it is unquestionably very ancient, and is still kept up even in great towns, though less in them than in the country. With us it is chiefly confined to the lower class of people, but in India high and low join in it; and the late Sourajah Doulah, I am told, was very fond of making *Huli fools*, though he was a Mussulman of the highest rank. They carry the joke here so far as to send letters making appointments in the names of persons, who it is known must be absent from their houses at the time fixed upon; and the laugh is always in proportion to the trouble given."*

Upon this Maurice† has well observed, that the origin of the custom is to be sought in the ancient practices amongst the Eastern people of "celebrating with festival rites the period of the Vernal Equinox, or the day when the new year of Persia anciently began." But, however derived, the name at least existed among the Romans, for we find the following pertinent passage in Plutarch,—"Why do they call the Quirinalia the *Feast of Fools?* was it because this day was given, as Juba writes, to those who were ignorant of their tribe? or was it because it was permitted to those, who had not sacrificed, like the rest, at the Fornacalia in their tribe, on account of business, travelling, or ignorance, to recover their festival on this occasion."‡

Brand is inclined to believe that *All Fools' Day* is only

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 334.

† Indian Antiquities, vol. vi. p. 71.

‡ Κεφαλαιων Καταγραφη Ρωμαικα, 89—Plut. Op. Tomus ii. p. 115. Qrto. Oxon: 1726. Sir Henry Ellis, who was directed to this passage by the Rev. W. Walter, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, calls it "a *singular passage*." In what its singularity consists I am at a loss to conceive. If there be anything at all out of the way in the business, it is that a writer of so much pretension as Sir Henry should need a finger-post to direct him on the road to Plu-

a corruption of *Old Fools' Day*,* and that it was meant originally in ridicule of the Druids. He says, "Our epithet of Old Fools'—in the Northern and Old English, *auld*, —does not ill accord with the pictures of Druids transmitted to us. The united appearance of age, sanctity, and wisdom, which these ancient priests assumed, doubtless contributed in no small degree to the deception of the people. The Christian preachers in their labours to undeceive the fettered multitudes would probably spare no pains to pull off the masks from these venerable hypocrites, and point out to their converts that age was not always synonymous with wisdom, that youth was not the peculiar period of folly, but that together with young ones there were also *old* (auld) fools."

It would be useless to waste any arguments in refutation of such solemn trifling, for which Brand does not offer even the shadow of a reason. The notion, such as it is, was borrowed by him from the "Essay to retrieve the ancient Celtic," as appears by his own previous quotation from that author.

This custom was not confined to our island. It seems to have prevailed also in Sweden, for we find that Toreen in his *Voyage to Suratte*, says, "The 1st of April we set sail on board the ship called *the Gothic Lion*, after the west wind had continued to blow for five months together at Gothenburgh, and had almost induced us to believe that there is a trade-wind in the Skaggerac Sea.

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tarch, whom he quotes with as much pomp and circumstance as if he had brought to light some rare manuscript. Still stranger is it that being so directed by his Cambridge friend, he could not manage to give a correct version of his author. Αισχαλιαν, he renders by *negligence*, instead of *business* or *occupation*, to say nothing of the general looseness of his translation which, if words mean any thing, should be rather called an imitation.

* Popular Antiquities, sub voce.

The wind made April fools of us, for we were forced to return before Skagen, and to anchor at Rifwefiol."*

Amongst the French the custom itself exists, though the name attached to it is changed. With them the person imposed upon is called a "poisson d'Avril," which Bellingen explains to be a corruption of *Passion*, and contends that it is a memorial of the Jews' mockery of our Saviour in taking him backwards and forwards from Annas to Caiphas, from Caiphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod back again to Pilate. His words are, "Quant au mot de *poisson*, il a esté corrompu, comme une infinité d'autres, par l'ignorance du vulgaire, et la longeur du temps a presque effacè la memoire du terme

* *A voyage to Suratte, China*, &c., from the 1st of April 1750 to 26th of June 1752. By Olof Toreen. This voyage, which is detailed in a series of letters, addressed to the celebrated Linnæus, is not published separately, but is to be found at the end of Peter Osbeck's "*Voyage to China and the East Indies*, translated from the German by J. R. Forster, 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1771." I am not however without my suspicions that Forster's translation is from Dominique Blackford's French version, published at Milan in the same year, though I have never seen the original, which is much more likely to be in Swedish than in German, considering that Toreen was a Swede writing to a Swede and for the Swedish public.

This quotation is also given in Ellis's edition of Brand, though there is some reason to doubt whether he ever saw the book he pretends to cite. His only giving the name of *Toreen*, without any mention of the work itself would not indeed be conclusive as to this point, but the suspicion almost becomes certainty when we find the extract shamefully garbled, and the only two names of places, that occur, so deformed by misspelling as scarcely to be recognizable, while the voyage is, as I have just mentioned, not published by itself, but as a sort of supplement to Osbeck. The places, I allude to, are *Skagen*, printed by Sir H. Ellis, *Shagen*, and Rifwefiol transformed by him into Riswopol, and that not only in the old quarto but in the recent 12mo edition, published by Knight; but indeed the last is the worst of the two; every page is full of blunders, both typographical and literary.

original; car au lieu qu' on dit presentment *Poisson* on a dit *Passion* de le commencement; parceque la passion du Sauveur du Monde est arrivée environ ce temps la, et d'autantque que les Juifs firent faire diverses courses à Jesus Christ, pour se moquer de luy et pour luy faire de la peine, le renvoyant d'Annè aCaïphe, de Caïphe a Pilate, de Pilate à Herode, et d'Herode a Pilate, on a pris cette ridicule ou plutot impie contume de faire courir et de renvoyer d'un droit a l'autre ceux desquels on se veut moquer environ ces jours la."* The absurdity of such an explanation will need no comment to those, who recollect what has been already mentioned of the same custom having existed in India and Rome, ages before the Jews had an opportunity of mocking Christ. But at the same time there seems to be just as little reason for agreeing with Mr. Donce, when he tells us, "I am convinced that the ancient ceremony of the *Feast of Fools* has no connection whatever with the custom of making fools on the first of April. The making of April fools, after all the conjectures which have been formed touching its origin, is certainly borrowed by us from the French, and may I think be deduced from this simple analogy. The French call them *poissons d'Avril*, i. e. simpletons, or, in other words, *silly mackarel*, which suffer themselves to be caught in this month. But as with us April is not the season of that fish, we have very properly substituted the word fools."†

How mackerel should be in season with the French, and not with us, Mr. Donce has not thought proper to explain, and we may safely reject this absurdity without

* L'Etymologie, ou Explication des Proverbes Français, par Fleury de Bellingen, p. 34. 8vo. à la Haye, 1656. See also, Leroux, Dictionnaire Comique, Tome i. p. 70. Minshew's Ductor in Linguas; and Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Anecdotes. Tom. ii. p. 97.

† Brand's Popular Antiquities, vol. i. p. 82.

any farther argument. It is possible that he may be right in denying the identity of *All Fools' Day* with the *Feast of Fools*; but it certainly admits of question; for although the latter was held on the first of November, yet it stands marked in the ancient Romish Calendar as having been removed thither from some other day—"Festum Stultorum hunc translatum est,"—"the Feast of Fools was removed hither." Removals of this kind were far from being uncommon in the Roman Calendar, when, as often happened, any particular day became laden with more Saints than it could conveniently carry.

Upon this subject it only remains to notice that in the North, *April fools* were called *April Gouks*, gouk, or gowk, which literally means a cuckoo, being commonly used for a term of contempt.

Palm Sunday, Dominica Palmarum, Dominica in Ramis Palmarum, Parasceue* or *Pascha Floridum*, is the sixth and last Sunday in Lent, and the one immediately preceding Easter. It was thus called from the old Roman Catholic custom of carrying palm branches in procession on that day in comemoration of the palms or olives, that the Jews strewed in the way of Christ when he went up to Jerusalem.† Strutt, in the third volume of Horda Angel-Cynnan, p. 174, quotes from an old manuscript, "wherefor holi

* *Parasceue*, though sometimes peculiarly applied to this day, is also a general term, for it often signifies the eve or vigil of any other solemn feast, in which there is a rest from labour:—"interdum etiam," says Hospinian (p. 59—de Fest. Christ.) "significat vigiliam sive profestum cujuscunque alterius festi solennis, in quo ab omni opere servili quiescendum est."—According to etymology it signifies nothing more than the *day of preparation*, from the Greek παρασκευὴ, a preparation.

† See *Festa Anglo-Romana*, p. 39, 12mo. London, 1678; *Historia Sacra*, p. 151, 8vo. London, 1720; *Wheatley's Illustration*, &c. p. 225, fol. London, 1720; *Durandi Rationale Divin. Offic.* lib. vi. *De Domin. in Ramis Palmarum*, p. 215, Qto. Venetiis, 1609.

Chirche this day makeith solempne processyon, in mynde of the processyon that Cryst made this dey; but for encheson* that wee have noone Olyve that bearith greene leaves, therefor we taken Palme, and geven instede of Olyve, and bear it about in processione."

Hospinian, however, denies that any mention of this custom occurs till about the year 455, and is extremely indignant with Polydorus for saying that it was instituted by the Apostles.†

It had also the name of *Dominica Magna*, or the *Great Lord's Day*, because of the "great and many infallible good things that were conferred on the faithful the week ensuing, namely, death abolished, slander, and the tyranny of Satan, removed by the painful and ignominious death of our Saviour."‡

Lastly, it was called *Capitilavium* by the vulgar, because it was a custom on that day to wash the heads of

* *Encheson* is a law term, borrowed from the French, signifying the "cause or reason wherefore any thing is done." See *Glossographia*, sub voce.

† Caruit autem istis nominibus (*Pascha Floridum* scilicet, et *Dominica in Ramis Palmarum*,) longo tempore. Unde credibile est sequentibus aliquot sæculis post natum Christum, nomen cum superstitione incæpisse demum. Mentio ejus primum fit circa annum Domini, 455; nam Dominicæ in Ramis Palmarum titulum, sed eum planè nudum, habet quædam homilia Maximi Taurinensis, qui circa hæc tempora vixit, in qua illud tantum ex psalmo 21. 'Deus, deus, respice in me' &c. tractat; festi ne verbulo quidem meminit. Unde etiam titulus ille non immerito diu post additus judicari debet. Meminit deinde ejus Paulus Diaconus, lib. xxiii. Rom. Rerum circa annum 800. In Constitutione autem eâ de Festis Caroli M. quæ extat, lib. i. cap. 158, nulla ejus fit mentio prorsùs. Quocirca mirandum est quâ authoritate, imò quâ audaciâ, Polydorus Dominicam Palmarum, sicut ut alios dies festos multos, qui diu post apostolorum, tempora demùm festivi habiti sunt, ab apostolis institutos et ordinatos esse dicere ausit." Hospinian De Origine Festorum Christianorum, p. 55, fol. Tiguri, 1612.

‡ Fest. Ang. Rom. p. 39.

the children, who were to be anointed, lest they should be unclean from the previous observance of Quadragesima.*

The boughs used on these occasions were previously blessed by the priest, a solemn ritual being appointed for the purpose. In the *Doctrine of the Mass*, as quoted by Brand,† we read that the priest was directed, after the conclusion of the Gospel to array himself in a red cope, and, taking his place upon the third step of the altar, to turn towards the south, palm-flowers and branches of palm being first laid on the altar for the clergy, and upon the altar-step on the south side for others. He is then to recite certain prayers, appropriated to the occasion, and accompanied by crossings and genuflections, duly established in the rubric, the whole being clearly the invention of monkish times, if we may believe the authority of Hospinian as to the period when the custom originated.‡ So far, however, it is easy to understand the policy of the priesthood, who lost no opportunity of impressing scriptural events upon the people's minds by connecting them with fasts or holidays. But one cannot help being surprised at finding these ceremonies so frequently of a low and ridiculous nature, and calculated above all measure to bring the thing celebrated into contempt. Thus on the present occasion the progress of Christ to Jerusalem was burlesqued, rather than commemorated, by a wooden image placed upon a wooden ass, which went upon wheels, accompanied by troops of priests, and a concourse of people, bearing palms; these they threw upon

* "Vulgus autem ideo eum diem *capitilavium* vocat, quia tunc moris erat lavandi capita infantum, qui unguendi sunt, ne forte observatione Quadragesimæ sordidati ad unctionem accederent." Sancti Isidori Hispalensis Episc. De Officiis Ecclesiæ, lib. 1. cap. xxvii. Opera. p. 397. Fol. Col. Agrip. 1617.

† "Finito evangelio sequatur," &c. Vide Brand's Popular Antiquities, Vol. 1, p. 70, 12mo. London, 1841.

‡ Vide supra, p. 128. Note.

the two images as they passed, and afterwards gathered them up again.

"For falsely they beleive that these have force and vertue great
Against the rage of winter storms and thunder's flashing heate."*

There seems, however, to be some reason for supposing that the ceremony in question, though the Roman Catholics have explained it as symbolizing Christ's entry into Jerusalem, may after all be nothing more than the old Pagan custom of carrying Silenus this day in triumph. Dr. Clark tells us that it is still usual to carry Silenus in procession at Easter, and we have already seen on more than one occasion how fond the old Church was of giving a Christian signification to heathen ceremonies, when they were unable to put them down.

As palms were not always, or even often to be procured in this country, the box, the willow, and occasionally the yew, were substituted. As regards the first, Newton in his "Herball for the Bible,"† after mentioning that the box-tree and the palm were often *confounded* together goes on to say, "this error grew, as I thinke, at the first for that the common people in some countries used to decke their church with the boughs and branches thereof on the Sunday next before Easter, commonly called Palme Sunday; for at that time of the yeare all other trees, for the most part, are not blowen or bloomed." But indeed we have a much more ancient authority for the use of box-wood on this day. In the Domesday Survey, under Shropshire, vol. i. fol. 252, a tenant is stated to have rendered in payment a bundle of box-twigs on Palm Sunday—"Terra dimid. car. Unus reddit inde *fascem buxi* in Die Palmarum."

As respects the occasional substitution of the willow for the palm-tree, there is a passage in Stow, which af-

* Barnaby Googe's Translation of Naogeorgus.

† 8vo. London, 1587, p. 206—as quoted by Brand, vol. 1, p. 71.

fords a good inferential evidence of the fact, though it may not be stated in so many words. This excellent old writer tells us, that "in the weeke before Easter had ye great shewes made for the fetching in of a twisted tree, or *with*, as they termed it, out of the woodes into the kinge's house, and the like into every man's house of honor or worship.* If however, this should by any be deemed insufficient, there is decisive evidence of the custom in the following lines from Barnaby Googe;†

"Besides they candles up do light, of vertue like in all,
And *willow-branches hallow, that they palmes do use to call.*"

Yet more convincing, if any thing can be more so, is what we find in Cole's *Adam in Eden*,—"The blossoms come forth before any leaves appear, and are in the most flourishing estate usually before Easter, divers gathering them to deck up their houses on Palm Sunday, and therefore the said flowers are called Palme."‡

Lastly as to yew, which, it must be allowed seems a strange substitute for the branches of the Palm-tree. The evidence however is no less direct than in regard to the box and willow, as appears by the previous quotation from Strutt.§

According to the new edition of Brand, this custom ceased in the second year of Edward the Sixth, but no notice of the kind appears either in Wheatley, or in Stow, the two authorities, to which the editor refers.‖

* Stow's "Survay of London," Small Qrto. 1603.—page 98; under the head of "Sportes and Pastimes." † Fol. 42.

‡ As cited by Brand in "Popular Antiquities," Vol. 1. p. 71. 8vo.

§ As cited in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 50.—March 1780, p. 128.

‖ See Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 111. Qrto. Lond. 1813. But, as I have before had occasion to remark, the whole work swarms with errors, every single one that existed in the quarto being faithfully reprinted in the octavo with an abundant increase. Thus the quotation given presently by me from Carew, is in both editions referred to as being at page 141, instead of 344, besides that it is unnecessarily garbled.

While, however, palms retained their sanctity in connection with the day, it was usual to preserve pieces of the hallowed wood formed into small crosses, which the devout carried about them in their purses.* In Cornwall, these crosses had a peculiar application; Carew says, "Little Colan hath less worth the observation; unless you will deride or pity their simplicity, who sought at our Lady Nant's Well there to fore-know what fortune should betide them, which was in this manner—Upon Palm Sunday these idle-headed seekers resorted thither, with a palm-cross in one hand, and an offering in the other; the offering fell to the priest's share; the cross they threw into the well, which if it swam, the party should outlive that year; if it sunk, a short-ensuing death was boded; and perhaps not altogether untruly, while a foolish conceit of this halsening,† might the sooner help it onwards. A contrary practice to the Goddess Juno's lake in Laconia; for there if the wheaten cakes, cast in upon her festival day, were by the water received, it betokened good luck; if rejected, evil. The like is written by Pausanias, of Inus in Greece; and by others, touching the offerings thrown into the furnace of Mount Ætna in Sicily."‡

Passion Week; Tenebræ. The week succeeding Palm Sunday, or that which immediately precedes Easter, is

* Vide "A Dialogue or Familiar Talke, betwene two Neighbours &c.," from Roae, by Michael Wodde, 1554, as cited by Brand, vol. i. p. 74, 8vo. Edit.

† The adjective *halsening* is explained by Todd in his edition of Johnson's Dictionary to mean "sounding harshly;" it rather seems to mean "ill-omened," both in the passage quoted, and here in the substantive form, which last he has omitted to notice. He cites from another part of Carew, "this *ill-halsening*, horny name hath, as Cornuto in Italy, opened a gap to the scoffs of many." The literal meaning of the word is no doubt merely *sounding*, from the German, *Hals*, "the throat."

‡ Carew's *Survey of Cornwall*, p. 344, qrto. London, 1811.

called Passion Week from the obsolete, but proper meaning of the word PASSION, *i. è. suffering*, in reference to the suffering of Christ upon the Cross.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of this week, are the days on which the offices, called *Tenebræ*, are celebrated, but as a rehearsal of the singing usually took place on the Wednesday immediately previous, that day also came to be considered as belonging to them. The word is derived from the Latin, *tenebra*, *i. e.* darkness, and, the office is one of the most striking in the calendar of the Roman Catholic Church. The appellation of *darkness* or *dark days* has been given "because," says an old writer,* "thereby they represent the darkness that attended and accompanied our Lord's Crucifixion; and then also that Church extinguish all her lights; and after some silence, when the whole office is concluded, they make a sudden great noise to represent the rending of the veil of the Temple and the disorder the whole frame of nature was in at the death of her Maker."

On this occasion, the principal characters and events of the day were thus symbolized. In a triangular candlestick were fourteen yellow wax tapers, seven on each side, and a white one at the top. The fourteen yellow candles represented the eleven apostles, the Virgin Mary, and the women that were with her at the crucifixion, while the white taper above was the emblem of Christ. Fourteen psalms were sung, and at the end of each a light was put out, till the whole fourteen were thus extinguished, and the white candle alone was left burning, which was then taken down and hid under the altar. The extinction of the fourteen lights symbolized the flight or mourning of the apostles and the women, and the hiding of the white taper denoted that Christ was in the sepulchre. At this moment of total darkness a noise was made by beating

* Festa Anglo Romana, p. 43.

the desks and books, and stamping upon the floor, which, as already said, was intended to represent the earthquake, and the splitting of rocks at the crucifixion.*

Holy Thursday, Shere Thursday, or *Maunday Thursday*—is the Thursday before Easter. Many etymologies have been given for the word, *Shere.* In an old homily, quoted in the *Weekly Packet of Advice from Rome,* we read that the day was so called, "for that in old fathers' days the people would that day shere theyr hedes and clypp they berdes, and pool theyr heedes, and so make them honest ayent Easter Day."† In Junius the word *sheer* is explained to signify *purus*, and a writer in the "Gentleman's Magazine,"‡ who signs himself T. Row, has concluded that it has a reference "to the washing of the disciples' feet, and be tantamount to clean." But to *sheere* is also the Anglo-Saxon word for "to divide," and it is even more likely to allude to the breaking of the bread by Christ, and the division of it amongst his disciples. There is the greater reason for this supposition in that the custom, still retained among us, of a royal dole of alms on that day is clearly a commemoration of the last supper. The only difference is, that in the early ages kings themselves washed the feet of the poor, and that when the first part of the custom became obsolete, they yet condescended to distribute the alms. James the Second was the last who performed this duty, and since his time the doles have been portioned out by an almoner, the number of mendicants being regulated by the years of the monarch, so that the poor at least have good reason to pray that the king may live long.§

* For a full account of this office, see Alban Butler's "Moveable Feasts."

† As cited by Brand, vol. i. p. 83.

‡ Vol. xlix. p. 349, July, 1779.

§ A lively account of this ceremony will be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April 1731, vol. i. p. 172. And in *Le Guide de*

There has been scarcely less dispute as to the meaning of the word, *Maunday* or *Maundy*. Wheatley, who calls it also Mandate Thursday, or *Dies Mandati*, tells us that it was so "called from the *commandment* (Mandatum) which our Saviour gave his Apostles to commemorate the sacrament of his supper, which he this day instituted after the celebration of the Passover; and which was for that reason generally received in the evening of the day; or as others think from that new commandment, which he gave them to love one another, after he had washed their feet in token of the love he bore to them, as is recorded in the second lesson at morning prayer."* Others again will have nothing to do with *mandate*, or *mandatum*, but derive it from the French *maundier*, "to beg,"† while some maintain with Junius‡ and Spelman, that the word is derived from the *mande*, or basket, from which the alms were distributed. But notwithstanding such high authorities, I am inclined to believe with those, who derive the word from *mandatum*; for in enquiring into its etymology, we must look at the custom, in which it is supposed to have

Londres, by R. Colsoni, 8vo. London, 1693, p. 33, we are told "Mais le roy, G. iii. (Guillaume III.) a laissè l'intendance de cette ceremonie a son grand aumonier, ou un eveque du royaume." Queen Elizabeth used actually to wash the people's feet herself, being we may presume a much better Christian than her successors; but she took care to have the business made as little disagreeable as possible, by having the pauper's feet cleansed and purified beforehand by the yeomen of the laundry with warm water and sweet herbs. Humility can, when it chooses, be so very proud!

* "Wheatley's *Rational Illustration*, p. 227. Fol. Lond. 1720. Minshew maintains the same opinion; he says, it is so called, "quasi dies mandati propter magnum illud mandatum et præceptum quod discipulis suis dedit servator noster de observatione cænæ, quam instituerat; dixit enim, 'hoc facite in mei memoriam.'" Minshew's Ductor in Linguas, sub voce, *Day*.

† Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xlix. p. 54.

‡ Vide *Junii Etymologicon*, sub voce.

originated, not as the custom *is*, but as it *was*. In olden times, when kings used to wash the feet of beggars, the words uttered by Christ and his apostles were sung for an antiphon, "mandatum novum do vobis," &c;* a new *commandment* I give unto you—and what is more probable than that the whole ceremony should take its name from so prominent a feature? The absurdity of deriving the name of the day from a word expressive of a small basket seems to have struck some of those, who have refused credence to the more obvious etymology; and they have shifted their position, maintaining that maunde, in process of time, came to signify an *alms*, and hence the day had its name. Unquestionably, such a meaning was subsequently attached to the word; but they have not been able to show that this was an original signification, and far less have they proved that the term Maundy was a name given to the custom when first established, which would be the case if their derivation were the true one. The earliest instance of the use of the word in this sense, that I am aware of, is in *Wits, Fits, and Fancies*, 4to. b. l. p. 82 (quoted by Brand,) where the kinsman of a merchant who is making his will, enquires jestingly of the lawyer, "what saith my uncle now? doth he now make his Maundies?" but this in my mind is conclusive of the point in dispute the very contrary way, the question of the heir expectant evidently being no more than a mere facetious allusion, as if the dying man were doling out the alms customary on a Maundy Thursday; nothing I think can be plainer than that it never was a *general* term for alms, though sometimes we find it used in that sense, but still allusively to an alms-giver. Indeed charity may be said to be the peculiar feature of the day, no doubt because it was now that Christ more particularly enjoined the prac-

* St. John, chap. xiii. v. 34.

tice of it to his disciples. Hence it was the custom in all Roman Catholic countries for the people, drest in their best, to visit several churches at this season saying a short prayer in each, and giving alms to the numerous beggars that were in waiting. This was called performing the *stations*.*

Good Friday.—The Friday before Easter Sunday. It was also called by the Saxons Long Friday,† perhaps from the long fasts and offices used by them at that time, for there appears no other reason. The epithet of *good* it is said to have obtained because the good work of man's redemption was then consummated, and on account of the benefits thence derived to us.

The hot cross-buns, that are in such common use amongst all classes, have by some been derived from the *eulogia*, or consecrated loaves of the Greek Church, though one would suppose that this was the very last quarter to which the Latins would have gone for any custom. The buns, marked with the cross, were, I should imagine, but a sort of lay-sacrament, and eaten as much in commemoration of our Saviour as the consecrated bread itself, being manifestly no more than another form of the bread that was at one time given in alms to people at the churches. Bishop Bonner tells us "that the gevyng of holy bread is to put us in remembrance of unitie, and that all Christen people be one mysticall body of Christ, like as the bread is made of many grains and yet but one loafe, and that the sayd holy bread is to put us also in remembrance of the housell‡ and the receyvyng

* See *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. li. p. 500.

† Wheatley's *Rational Illustration*, p. 229.

‡ *Housel* was the old English name for the sacrament from the time of St. Augustine till the Reformation, when the word *sacrament* was substituted for it. But sacrament does not altogether supply the place of the term thus rejected; it denotes a *sacred sign*, whereas housel

of the moste blessed body and blood of our Saviour Jesu Christ."*

As to the word, *bun*, it is likely enough to be a corruption of *boun*,† the original name for sacrificial cakes, and which the Greeks transmuted into βους, by changing the final nu into sigma. The proper word, however, βουν, reappeared in the accusative case, according to the usual mode of Greek inflection.

Another custom of this day, but which was abolished by the convocation under Henry the Eighth, in 1536, is the creeping to the cross upon the knees and kissing it. Bishop Bonner in the work just quoted, says, "that the creepyng to the crosse on good fryday signifieth an humblyng of ourselves to Christe before the Crosse, and that the kissyng of it signifieth a memory of our redemption."‡

Even kings and queens were not exempted from this idle ceremony, though they contrived to take the humility as much as possible out of it. In the Earl of Northumberland's *Household Book* § we read, amongst a multitude of items—"Item, My Lorde useth and accustometh yerely when his Lordschip is at home to caus to be delyveride for the Offerings of my Lordi's Sone and Heire the Lord Percy upon the sayd Good Friday when he *crepith the Crosse* ij d." In a note upon this, the editor quotes the following curious passage from an ancient Book of the Ceremonial of the Kings of England—

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implies a victim of sacrifice, and we find Bede employing the word *victim* to denote the sacrifice of the Mass. Consult upon this subject Dr. Lingard's admirable "History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church," vol. i. p. 15.

* *Bonner's Injunctions, &c.* Sig. A. 1. Qto. 1555. bl. l.

† Vide Bryant's Mythology.

‡ *Bonner's Injunctions.* Sig A. ij.

§ Page 334. 8vo. London, 1770.

"Firste, the Kinge to come to the Chappell or Closset withe the Lords and Noblemen waytinge upon him, without any sword borne before hime as that day. And ther to tarrie in his travers * until the Byshope and the Deane have brought in the Crucifixe out of the Vestrie, and layd it upon the Cushion before the highe Alter. And then the Usher to lay a carpett for the Kinge to *creepe to the Crosse* upon.... And thus done the Queene shall come downe out of her Clossett or Traverse, into the Chappell with La. and Gentlewomen waytinge upon her, and *creepe to the Crosse;* and then goe agayne to her Clossett or Traverse. And then the La. to *creep to the Crosse* likewise; And the Lords and Noblemen likewise."†

From the same authority we learn that our sapient monarchs used to hallow rings on this day for curing the cramp, the ceremonial of which is set down with infinite pomp and circumstance. Hospinian makes these rings work a yet higher miracle, and relates that they were preservatives against the falling-sickness, deducing the custom from one, which had long been preserved with great veneration in Westminster Abbey, having been brought from Jerusalem to one of the Edwards.‡

Easter Eve—used to have in the old Roman Catholic times a variety of ceremonies that have long since been exploded. The fires were quenched in all the churches,§

* *Travers* is a "small room," or "cabinet."

† *Northumberland Household Book*, Notes, p. 436.

‡ Hospinian *De Origine Festorum* Christianorum. Fol. Tiguri 1612. Fol. 61, 2d p.

§ Here again, as Cælius Rhodiginus well observes, is a manifest imitation of the Pagan rites of Vesta. His words are, "quod vero scitu dignum est, nostræque religioni consentaneum, mense Martio quotannis innovabatur ignis in templo Vestæ, quod in Fastis canit Ovidius.

Adde quòd arcanâ fieri novus ignis in ædo
Dicitur, et vires flamma refecta capit."

and kindled anew from the flint, which being hallowed by the priest every one would take home a brand to be lighted, when occasion required, as a preservative against tempests. A large taper, called the Paschal Taper, was consecrated and incensed, and allowed to burn night and day as a sign that Christ had conquered hell, after which it was plunged into the holy water, always consecrated at this season, with a view to its lasting till the return of Easter.* But in some churches it would seem that light was communicated in a different manner.† An artificial serpent was borne upon a rod, a candle with the new flame being affixed upon its head, from which the Paschal taper and all the other church-candles were lighted. This serpent was regarded as a type of that which was set up by Moses in the desert to heal those bitten by that reptile.‡

Other customs of a yet more absurd description prevailed at one time in this country. Such was the building of an imitation of the holy sepulchre on the anniversary of the crucifixion and placing the host in it, with a person set to watch for that night and the next. Early in the morning of the third day this consecrated wafer

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Ludov. Cœlii Rhodigini Lection. Antiq. Libri Triginta, fol. 1599; lib. xv. c. 14.—"It is worthy of notice, and agreeable to our religion, that every year in the month of March the fire was renewed in the temple of Vesta; as Ovid sings in his *Fasti*,—'Add that new fire is said to be made in the secret temple and the renewed flame acquires strength.'"

* *Barnaby Googe's Naogeorgus.* And in *Coate's History of Reading*, Quarto, 1803, p. 131, under "Churchwarden's Accounts" is the following entry, anno 1559—"Paid for makynge of the Pascall and the Funte Taper, 5s: 8d." These Pascal tapers were of enormous size, and one of them used in Westminster Abbey in 1557 is stated by the same authority to have weighed 300 pounds.

† Vide Durandi Rat. Div. Off. Lib. vi. Cap. 89.—sec. 12—p. 251.

‡ Numbers, chap. xxi. v. 7, et seq.

was taken out, when Christ was said to have arisen. In Coate's work, just mentioned, we find one Roger Brock playing the part of watchman, for which he was paid eightpence, as appears by the record, and a note is appended to the account stating that, "this was a ceremony used in churches in remembrance of the soldiers watching the sepulchre of our Saviour."* This custom was kept up so late as the two first years of Queen Elizabeth in some churches,† for it was not all that had the privilege.‡

Easter-Day; Asturday; Paschal Sabbath; Eucharist; Godde's Sunday.—The term *Easter* is derived, as some say, from the Saxon *oster*, "to rise," this being the day of Christ's rising from the dead. But as the month appears to have had its name of Easter long before the introduction of Christianity we must look to some other source for the origin of the term; and where does it seem so visible as in the word Eostre, (the Saxon Goddess,) a corruption in all likelihood of *Astarte*,§ the name under which the Assyrians, Babylonians, Phœnicians, and the most ancient nations of the East worshipped the moon, in like manner as they adored the sun under the name of Baal.

Another derivation of the word remains to be noticed, for which I remember no authority but that which I am about to give from one of the Cotton manuscripts;—

* An account of this ceremony, as practised at Rouen in France and at Durham with us, is given in the *Vetusta Monumenta* of the Antiquarian Society; vol. iii. Letterpress to plate xxxi. p. 3.

† Idem, pp. 3 and 4.

‡ In the *Monumenta Paderbornensia*, p. 134, an old charter runs thus, "Hæ autem parochiæ omnia jura parochialia habebunt nisi quod crucem diebus dominicis et in solemnitatibus non ferent—in Parasceve sepulturam crucifixi non facient."

§ This *Astarte* is the *Ashtaroth* of Scripture.

"Gode men and wommen,* os ye knowe alle well, this day is called in some place *asturday*, in some place paschday, in some place goddus sounday. Hit is callde asturday, as kandulmasse day of kandulles, and palme sounday of palmes, ffor wolnoz in uche place hit is the maner this day for to done fyre oute of the houce at the asturf† that hath bene alle the wyntur brente wit fuyre and blaknd wit smoke, hyt schal this day bene arayed wit grene rusches and swete floures strowde alle aboute schewyng a heyghe ensaumpul to alle men and wommen that ryzte os thei machen clene the houce withine bering owte the fyre and strawing there flowres; ryzte so ze schulde clanson the houce of zoure sowle."‡

In plain English the monk would call it *hearth-day*, because hearths were then cleaned and strewed with flowers; but few I imagine will be inclined to put much faith in such an etymology, and I have only recorded it upon the obvious principle that every thing ought in fairness to be quoted that seems to make against one's own opinions. At the same time I do not at all question that *Easter-day* was called *Asturday*; the monk, though blundering in his etymology, could hardly be mistaken as to a simple *fact*, which must have been known to all his audience as well as to himself; but I hold this very circumstance as helping to confirm my theory. *Astur* is evidently but another form of Easter or Astarte, and has nothing to do here with a fire-place, though that is

* This is the usual form which prefaces all these homilies; they are supposed to be addressed by the officiating priest to the people.

† *Astur* or *astre*, signifies a *hearth*. See Spelman, sub voce.

‡ MS. Cotton. Claudius, A. 2, fol. 58—in a tract that has for its title "Tractatus, qui vocatur Festial. per frēm Johēm (i.e. fratrem Johannem) Mirkus compositus, canonicum regularē Monasterii de Lulshutt. Anglicē conscribitur, et ad festarum unamquemque reperitur ibi homelia ex legendis plerumque consortiata."

one meaning of the word, and a meaning which might lead us to infer that the goddess had her name from fire, or light. This conjecture is much strengthened when we reflect that the ancient Germans worshipped a deity under the name of Herthus, or Hertus, who though called by Tacitus, in his Germany, the Mother of the Earth, seems in all likelihood to have been the same goddess afterwards corrupted by the Anglo-Saxons into Astur and Eostre; and it should also be borne in mind that the word *hearth* has been generally derived from the Icelandic *hyr*, i.e. *fire*. I think myself therefore borne out in this deduction of the two from the same origin.

It would be too presumptuous to affect for a moment to give anything like a decided opinion upon a subject so buried in the darkness of remote antiquity, yet I can not help suspecting that the Greek ἀστήρ may have come from the same now-unknown source, as in like manner did our own word, *star*, the traces of both being quite evident in the Persian. The conclusion therefore in my mind is that the Saxon *Easter*, or *Eoster*, the Greek ἀστήρ the English *star*, and the Hebrew *Ashtaroth*, have all come from the same long-forgotten original—perhaps Phœnician—signifying *fire*, and that the goddess Eostre was the Saxon Diana, in whom they worshipped that milder principle of the vivifying power which was adored in summer as proceeding from her brother, Bel. Right or wrong, this conjecture will sufficiently account for the Goddess Eostre being worshipped at the vernal equinox.

The name of *Paschal* would seem to be strangely given to the day of the resurrection, but it has been thus explained by the old writer of the *Festa Anglo-Romana*. "Tis called Pascha, a Passover, not in memory of the Angel's transit in Egypt—the Jewish Passover being a holy action appointed by God in the killing and eating of a lamb, partly that the Church of the Jews might re-

member the benefits God conferred upon them in passing over the houses, and not smiting them,*—but our feast is celebrated in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, tho' we still retain the name of Pascha not only because the lamb that was killed by the Jews of old in their Passover was a true type of the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus, which was sacrificed for man's salvation, but because at that very time he passed to his Father from this world—*Pasach* signifies *transitio*, a passage, from *pasach*, transire, *i.e.* to pass—or because then was made a passage from an old to a new life."†—The explanation does not throw much light upon the subject.

Eucharist is from a compound Greek word, which may, as Minshew‡ explains it, refer to the thanks to be especially given on this occasion; or, as is not unlikely, to the benefit conferred on the participators of the body and blood of our Saviour. This day is always the first Sunday subsequent to the first full moon, which happens on, or next after, the 21st of March; but if the full moon happens on a Sunday, then Easter Day is the Sunday following. It used to be characterized by a belief amongst the people that the sun danced in joy of the occasion, and many were accustomed to rise early for the sake of witnessing this phenomenon; perhaps those, who saw the beams quivering upon the surface of a stream shaken by the wind, might persuade themselves they had been successful. This superstition is not, I believe, quite extinct even now in some of the more unenlightened parts of the country.

In the times of Roman Catholic predominance, the church celebrated the day with many pageants that

* Exodus, c. xii. v. 11.

† Festa Anglo Rom. p. 44.

‡ Ductor in Linguas; sub voce.

differed little from those of the theatre, except in being less amusing and less rational. Amongst other follies we are told, that as on the previous evenings the watching of the sepulchre had been acted, so upon this day the resurrection was represented. The form of the ceremony varied as to details in different places, though substantially the same in all countries. Fosbrooke's account of the way in which it was practised amongst us is perhaps the most simple. "Then during a religious service four monks robed themselves, one of whom in an alb,* as if he had somewhat to do, came stealingly to the tomb, and there, holding a palm branch, sat still till the responsary was ended; when the three others carrying censers in their hands came up to him step by step as if looking for something. As soon as he saw them approach, he began singing in a soft voice (dulcisone) 'whom seek ye?'—to which was replied by the three others in chorus, 'Jesus of Nazareth.'—This was answered by the other, 'he is not here; he is risen.'—At which the three last, turning to the choir, cried, 'Alleluia! the Lord is risen.' The other then as if calling them back sang, 'Come and see the place,'"—and then rising, raised the cloth, shewed them the place without the cross, and linen clothes in which it was wrapped. Upon this they laid down their censers, took the clothes, extended them to show that the Lord was risen, and singing an antiphone placed them upon the altar."†

* i.e. a *white surplice*, but differing from that now in use by its being worn close at the wrist like the lawn sleeves of a bishop.

† Fosbrooke's *British Monachism*, p. 65, qrto. Lond. 1817. Hone, in his usual blundering way, has given an account, which he cites as being from Fosbrooke, who 'according to him quotes from Du Cange; but in fact his tale does not relate to Durham but to Rouen, and is to be found no doubt in Du Cange, though his informant forgot to tell him it was under the head *Sepulchri Officium*

It was customary also at this time for the bishops and archbishops to play at dice or ball with their subordinates, and to lay aside all the pomp and distance belonging to their station, a manifest imitation of the Saturnalia. Moreover, the whole body of the ecclesiastics were now wont to shave the head and beard, to bathe and to indue the white stole; and to each of these actions was supposed to attach a spiritual type,—the use of the bath signifying that the soul should in like manner be purified; the shaving, that our vices should be laid aside; while the white vestments might refer either to the appearance of the angels, or to a firm expectation of the robe of immortality; or it might allude to the severity of penance being over.* Above all, it was requisite that no one on Easter Day should eat anything that had not been blessed by the priest, or at least without first making the sign of the cross over it; for the devil just then was held to be particularly on the watch for souls.† Durand gives a lamentable instance of the fatal consequences arising from the neglect of this precaution, and

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Ecclesiasticum, without which notice the reference to Du Cange is about as useful as a direction would be "to a small village somewhere in Europe." In this version, if we may so call it, the three priests wore head-dresses to represent the three Marys, namely, Mary Magdalen, Mary of Bethany, and Mary of Naim; or, in the words of the old manuscript, from which Du Cange quotes, "tres diaconi canonici induti dalmaticis et amictis, habentes super capita sua ad similitudinem mulierum &c."—i.e. "three deacons clad in dalmatics and amices, and wearing upon their heads after the fashion of women, &c." In Durandus again the ceremony appears to have some variations, two of the apostles St. John and St. Peter being added to the performers. Vide Durandi Rationale Divin. Officior. lib. vi. cap. 87, p. 247.

* Vide Durandi Rat. Div. Offic. lib. vi. cap 86, p. 245.

† Durand. Rat. Div. Offic. ut supra.

of which he was himself an eye-witness.* Two devils got possession of a young girl and tormented her for three years, a miracle which I may add is often renewed in our own days, but with this especial difference, that, when the devil now possesses a woman, he does not torment herself but others. However, on this occasion a cunning exorcist drove the fiends out at last, having previously made them confess that they had been lying perdu in a melon which the girl had incautiously eaten without first making the sign of the cross.

Many similar absurdities were practised upon this day, the growth of a rude age, and which the judicious reader will as little think of imputing to Catholicism, as of condemning the Protestant faith for the ravings of the Munster Anabaptists or for the follies of Joanna Southcott and her disciples.

A variety of sports characterised the Easter holidays among the people. In Lancashire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and some other counties, the custom of *heaving* or *lifting* prevailed; the men heaving or lifting the women in a chair on Easter Monday, and the women doing the same by the men on the Tuesday following. At the end of the ceremony, the person lifted was duly kissed by his lifters and obliged to pay a forfeit. Sometimes this took place within, but more frequently out of doors; the custom in some places being to place the victim upright in a chair, while in others he was laid horizontally on the bearers' hands, and raised above their heads. At another period, or perhaps at a different part of the country, the men took the buckles on Monday from the shoes of the women, who the next day returned the compliment, a forfeit having to be paid in either case for the redemption of the plundered article.†

* Durandi Rat. Div. Offic. lib vi. cap. 86, p. 245

† Brand's Pop. Antiq., vol. i., p. 103,

We are told, moreover, by Durandus,* that in many places it was the custom on the second day after Easter for the women to beat their husbands, and on the third, for the husbands to beat their wives. At Coleshill, in the county of Warwick, there is a custom, that if the young men of the town can catch a hare and bring it to the parson of the parish before ten o'clock, the parson is bound to give them a calf's head and a hundred of eggs for their breakfast, and a groat in money.† The game of quintain, too, was in olden times played upon the water, according to Fitz-Stephens, as quoted by Stow at the end of his *Survay of London*—"In the Easter holydays they have a sort of naval fight. A shield being strongly fastened to a pole in the middle of the river, a youth prepared to strike it with a lance, stands in the prow of a boat, which is impelled by the stream and oars. If he break the lance against the shield and continues firm, he has succeeded; if the lance strikes strongly and remains whole, he is flung into the river; the boat, impelled by its own motion, passes on. Nevertheless, two boats are stationed near the shield, in which are several young men to pick up the striker upon his fall into the river, or as soon as he rises again upon the water." ‡

* "In plerisque ēt regionibus mulieres secundâ die post pascha verberant maritos suos; die verò tertiâ, mariti uxores suos."—Durandi *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, lib. vi. ch. 86-9, p. 245. 4to. 1609.

† Blount's *Fragmenta Antiquitatis*, &c.

‡ "In feriis paschalibus ludunt quasi prælia navalia; in arbore siquidem mediamne scuto fortiter innexo, navicula remo et raptu fluminis cita in prorâ stantem habet juvenem, scutum illud lancea percussurum, qui si scuto illi lanceam illidens frangat eam et immotus persistat, habet propositum, voti compos est; si vero lanceâ integrâ fortiter percusserit, in profluentem amnem dejicitur. Navis motu suo acta præterit. Sunt tamen hinc inde secus scutum duæ

Cakes made of flour, eggs, and *tansies*, whence they derived the name of *tansays*, or *tansy-cakes*, were eaten about this time, the bitter herb being considered a great purifier of the blood, and very necessary after the long fish-diet. These cakes were often made the prizes at games of foot-ball, races, &c.*

Hock, or Hoke, Day or Tide.—The derivations of this word are so numerous, and at the same time so uncertain, that it is not worth while to trouble the reader with them. According to Douce, it fell upon the second Tuesday after Easter, while ancient writers say it was celebrated on the quindena Paschæ. The custom of the day was for both men and women to hold a rope across the road, barring the way, and pulling to them the passers by, who were obliged to pay a toll, which was supposed to be appropriated to pious uses.

St. George of Cappadocia, the hero of our nursery tales, in conjunction with the dragon, claims the 23rd of April. Many of the miracles attributed to him were rejected by the Council of Nice who in his case seem to have been troubled with an unusual access of discretion; for after all they were not out of the usual order; it was only pretended that he could neither be drowned, nor crushed by the imposition of enormous weights, nor burned by red-hot iron or boiling lead, nor be destroyed by being confined in a brazen bull heated to a white heat, all of which things Hospinian pronounces to be suspicious and unworthy of a martyr.† He is too fastidious.

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naves stationariæ et in eis juvenes plurimi ut eripiant percussorem flumine absorptum cum primo emersus comparet, vel summa rursus cum bullit in unda."—*Stephanides*, in *Stow's Survay*, p. 577.

* De Orig. Fest. Christ. p. 79.

† Authorities for this may be found in many works. See *Lewis' Presbyterian Eloquence*, p. 17. Brand's Pop. Antiq., &c.

In former times it was the custom for people of fashion to wear blue coats on St. George's day; because, as some will have it, of the abundant flowering of blue bells in the fields about that season; or, according to many, because blue was the national colour, as Saint George was the national saint; and, therefore, the one was appropriate to the other.

St. Mark's Day or Eve—was observed, not as a *fast*, but as a *day of abstinence*, which in the Church of Rome meant very different things.* On fast-days it allowed but one meal in four-and-twenty hours; while on days of abstinence, provided the people abstained from flesh and made but a moderate meal, they were indulged in a collation at night. The reason of this privation, originally ordained by Saint George the Great, the Apostle of England, was that they might imitate Saint Mark's disciples, the first Christians of Alexandria, who under his guidance were eminent for piety and fasting.† Many allusions are made to this by old writers; and Davies tells us that "upon St. Mark's Day after Easter, *which was commonly fasted throughout all the country, and no flesh eaten upon it*, the friars with the monks had solemn procession and went to the Bow, or Bough, Church with the procession, and had very solemn service there and one of the monks did make a sermon to all the people of the parish that came thither."‡ Nor was the day without its superstitions. Brand was informed by a clergyman of Yorkshire, that it was a custom of the people of that county to "sit and watch in the church porch on St. Mark's Eve from eleven o'clock at night till one in the morning. The third year—for this must

* Wheatley, *Rational Illustration*, p. 201, fol. Lond. 1720.

† Ibid. p. 202.

‡ *Ancient Rites, &c. of the Church of Durham*, published by J. D. of Kidwelly, p. 156, 12mo. London, 1672.

be done thrice—they are supposed to see the ghosts of all those, who are to die the next year, pass by into the church."* Hone gives a long account of a similar custom prevailing in Northamptonshire, but his unsupported authority is hardly a sufficient voucher for such details.† Brand also states, that it was at one time a custom to bless the corn upon this day.

* Pop. Antiq., vol. i. p. 115.

† Every Day Book, vol. i. p. 523.

THE BURNING CLIFF AT HOLWORTH.

Holworth Cliff is situated on Ringstead Bay, six miles east of Weymouth, and constitutes a bulwark between the farm of that name and the sea. It should be understood, however, that the *Burning Cliff* is not an original formation, but an union of fragments detached by natural causes from the two principal elevations of the parent rock. These are composed of distinct substances; and it is to their combination, acting chemically, that the present phenomenon has by many been attributed.

It is now upwards of thirty years since the combustible materials began to separate from the main cliff, and most probably from the same causes that have formed the whole line of the undercliff at the back of the Isle of Wight, a phenomenon which is there known under the name of a *landslip*. In this case nearly three more years elapsed before the whole mass had finally settled below; and much the same time passed before the first symptoms of the phenomenon showed themselves in the form of a vapour hovering above the loose surface. Dense exhalations shortly afterwards succeeded; and finally in March, 1827, slight flames were seen issuing here and there from any chance cracks or crevices in the soil. The general curiosity soon becoming excited by these appearances, the ground was dug up and laid open, when it was found that most of the scattered streams of smoke they had observed must have arisen from rain filtering

through the chinks in the earth upon the hot substance below. An attempt was then made to bore as near as possible to the largest apertures, but the calcareous fragments threw such obstacles in the way of the labourers that it was speedily abandoned.

Towards the end of April, however, it was resolved to try a second experiment, when on the first day their efforts only elicited the appearance of a few sparks. On the second they were more successful, the workmen suddenly coming upon a vast body of fire that resembled a smelter's furnace; but when they had dragged out a quantity of this ignited matter, they were obliged to desist by the heat and effluvia it emitted, and left it exposed on the ground, where it continued to burn till the following morning.

From this time the appearances of smoke and fire continued to increase with little intermission, till about the fifth of September the ground opened in three places, eastward of the original fissure. These crevices were of some magnitude, and, the outer coating of mould being removed, vivid fire was seen amidst the interstices of the lime-stone. In a few days the earth cracked open in seven more places, from each of which a thick smoke poured forth, while the heat proceeding from the fissures was so intense as in a few minutes to ignite any inflammable matter that was applied to them. By the first of October the fire had so much extended its sphere of action that the surface of red hot stone in one of the apertures occupied a space full three feet square; and the entire limit of the smoking crevices, which at first was limited to about six feet, had now spread in length from east to west, till it reached very nearly a hundred feet.

It would seem that after this time no excavations of any magnitude were made, the inhabitants of Weymouth

being wiser than the old lady who destroyed the goose to learn the mystery of its laying golden eggs. It is likely enough that the cause of the fire was not very deeply seated, and had they dug much lower they would have destroyed their phenomenon altogether. The magnates of Weymouth adopted a much better course; they cut away an angular projection of the hill, that stood between the town and their new Vesuvius, so that at night-fall they could enjoy the sight in all its glory without the trouble of going to seek it. As if to reward their prudent forbearance, smoke was soon observed to issue from this point also, and in a short time afterwards, flames burst forth at intervals, and almost to the same extent as at the original fissure.

And here it may be necessary to enter into some explanation for the benefit of those who have never been at Weymouth. At first the Burning Cliff lay upon an elevation of about eighty-five feet from the beach, but it was chiefly on a sort of shelf half way up the southern side that the flames made their appearance. During the spring tides in the latter part of 1827 and in the commencement of the year following, when the water rose to an unusual height and was followed by neap-tides almost equal to them, immense masses slid down at intervals with a terrific uproar; the position of the apertures was thus gradually altered so as to present an arch-like form, the extremities having sunk full thirty feet below their former level. In this state for awhile the mass rested, till at length in the middle of February, the whole being saturated and softened by high tides and heavy rains, it sank down within ten feet of the level of the beach, and there lay like a heap of smoking ruins.

The two principal cliffs stand, one to the north, and the other to the north-east, of the mass that has thus been dissevered from the parent rock. Of these the

former consists of a dark mould, strongly impregnated with bitumen; the latter is mostly composed of chalk, flint, and limestone. In the various strata below may be found the Cornu Ammonis, pyrites, or fire-stones, and a grey stony concretion, studded thickly with small shells. The inflammable material would seem to consist, in a great degree, of Fossile Wood—Lignum Fossile—which in its burning emits a most nauseous stench, yet does not affect the eyes, and is even sometimes used by the poorer classes for fuel.

It may also be mentioned, though totally unconnected with the combustion or its causes, that a vertebral bone, supposed to have formed part of the skeleton of an ichthyosaurus, has been found amongst the other matters, a little way below the surface. On a level with the burning apertures, and only a short distance inland, is a pond, from which a small stream runs; but, though so near to the seat of the fire, it has not the slightest taste or smell of sulphur, whence it may be inferred that the combustible materials are confined to a very narrow limit.

Various hypotheses have been suggested in explanation of this phenomenon. Many, with more imagination than philosophy, have maintained that the first ignition of the soil arose from a flash of lightning skimming over a surface that was previously charged with inflammable matter; while others have attributed it to the agency of frost. The most rational theory is that which supposes the flame was spontaneously generated by the union of the gasses produced from the matter of the two cliffs, saturated as they were with salt water, and receiving a current of external air through the numerous clefts and fissures. With so obvious and sufficient a cause it would be useless to seek any farther.

NATURAL PHENOMENON IN CORNWALL.

In the parish of Saint Austle there is a singular phenomenon, which seems to have mightily puzzled the wits of the good neighbourhood, and in earlier times would certainly have given rise to some legend of Robin Goodfellow, or of hidden treasures. In the present day folks having grown wiser, or less imaginative, are contented to wonder at what they cannot comprehend.

The phenomenon in question is the appearance of a light near the turnpike road at Hill-Head, about three quarters of a mile west of the town. In the summer it is not often visible, dry weather being most probably incompatible with the causes of the meteor; but in the winter, and more particularly in the months of November and December, scarcely a dark night passes, in which it may not be seen. Its appearance is that of a small flame, of a yellowish hue, and for the most part stationary; even when moving, it wanders very little from its usual spot, but alternately rises and descends over the same place. As it has existed from time immemorial, it has at length become so familiar to the people of the vicinity as to excite no attention, but at one period many

attempts were made to discover its cause and nature, though without success. On approaching the spot where according to previous observation it should be, the flame invariably became invisible to the enquirer, even while remaining perfectly luminous to those who watched it at a distance. A level was then taken during its appearance, by which the curious were guided in their researches, and still the phenomenon was pronounced to be as great a mystery as ever. There can be little doubt, however, notwithstanding its stationary character, that it was neither more nor less than a Will-o'-the-Wisp, and produced by the same causes, even though the soil was not actually marshy.

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.

DEVONSHIRE.—If a man or woman has been injured by a scald or burn then shall the charmer place her hand gently on her heart, and in a soft voice shall say—

> "Three angels came from the north, east, and west;
> One brought fire, another brought ice,
> And the third brought the Holy Ghost;
> So out, fire; and in frost;
> In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

It is supposed, however, by the lower orders, who put great faith in the charm, that it would lose all its efficacy if it were once to get into a printed book. To prevent so grievous a mishap, the secret is orally handed down from one to another, the most legitimate and approved way being, that it should be communicated by a man to a woman, and by a woman to a man. But this last rule is not always attended to, nor is the virtue of the charm held to be affected even though it were imparted without the opposition of the sexes.

Many other old superstitions are still to be found amongst the lower classes of the Devonians, who a few years since clung with remarkable tenacity to the feelings and customs of their forefathers. The cuckoo with them

was, and I believe still is, an ominous bird; and to hear him for the first time on the left hand is a marvellous sign of ill luck. They imagine too that the King's Evil may be cured by kissing seven virgins, daughters of the same mother, for seven days consecutively. But the most curious of their general superstitions is that of the *Glass Rod*, which they set up in their houses and wipe clean every morning, under the idea that all diseases from malaria, as well as other contagious maladies will gather about the rod innoxiously. It is twisted, in the form of a walking stick, and is from four to eight feet long. They can seldom be persuaded to sell it, and if it gets broken they augur that misfortune will ere long befall some one in the cottage where it has been set up.

Others of their superstitions are peculiar to certain families. Such for instance is the popular legend attached to the family of the Oxenhams at Newhouse, according to which every decease amongst its members is prognosticated by the appearance of a white-breasted bird, that flutters awhile about the bed of the sick person, and then suddenly disappears. This is particularly noticed by Howell in his "Familiar Letters," in which may be found the following monumental inscription. "Here lies John Oxenham, a goodly young man, in whose chamber, as he was struggling with the pangs of death, a bird with a white breast was seen fluttering about his bed, and so vanished." The same circumstance is related of his sister, Mary, and of two or three others of the family.

Cheshire.—A superstition, not very dissimilar to the above, still obtains amongst the peasantry about Brereton. Adjoining to Brereton, the seat of the family of that name, there is a pool wherein the trunks of trees are seen to swim for certain days together, before the death of any heir of that house; and after the heir is dead, they sink, and are never more seen 'till the next occasion of the same

kind.* But in truth this kind of forewarnings appear to have been very common; Burton tells us that, "diverse ancient families in England are forwarned of their deaths by oaks bearing strange leaves."†

Surrey. (Oral).‡—On the high road between Buckland and Reigate the devil is popularly believed to amuse himself with dancing, sometimes in the shape of a dog, and at others in that of a donkey. Contrary to the received notion that all spirits, and particularly evil spirits, dread the water, the site of these terpsichorean exhibitions is a bridge, which crosses a little rill, and every effort made to dislodge him has hitherto proved ineffectual. He has been shot at repeatedly, but his Satanic Majesty turned out as might have been expected altogether bullet-proof. One old fellow, who was bolder than his neighbours, then ventured near enough to run a pitch-fork through him, but still he danced on as merrily as ever, steel evidently producing no more effect than ball and powder had done. Some unbelievers, however, who have a wonderful propensity for explaining everything by natural causes, have hinted at the presence of marshy grounds in the neighbourhood as being likely enough to have originated certain meteoric illusions, which by the usual process of exaggeration might grow into a dancing devil. It can not be denied that as great miracles have been built upon no better foundations; but for all that the people choose to believe their own eye-sight, and will not give up their Buckland Hag, as they call this apparition, let philosophy say what it pleases.

Surrey and Kent (Oral).—In both these counties every

* See Burton's *Admirable Curiosities*, p. 24, 12mo. London. 1737.

† Id. p. 31.

‡ These superstitions, which are marked *Oral*, have been picked up by myself amongst the peasantry; the reader therefore must judge for himself how far it may be right to put his faith in them.

falling star is supposed to prognosticate a new birth, though it does not appear that the child so announced has any particular gifts or privileges beyond less ceremonious visitors. Amongst the alchemists of the olden times, these fallen stars were called Nostock,* and were supposed to be a kind of jelly or slime, such as is often found during summer in the fields and meadows. The French, however, according to Pluquet, imagine that shooting stars announce death.†

A still more singular superstition in these parts is the connection which the people imagine to exist between bees and their departed owners. When the master or mistress, of a house dies, the survivor must go to the hive, and, knocking thrice, cry out,

> "Brownie, brownie, wake up;
> Your master (or mistress) is dead."

If this information is not duly given, the bees themselves will die shortly after, but whether from grief, or the anger of the departed spirit, is not very evident. It was in the parish of Cudham that I picked up the custom, but I was given to understand that it was general throughout the two counties. In Norfolk also and Suffolk a custom somewhat similar prevails. When the master or the mistress dies, due notice of the fact is communicated to the bees by tying a piece of black crape about the hives, and if this be not done they are sure to die, according to the popular belief in those parts.

Yorkshire.‡ (Oral.)—People, who have the good fortune to live in a street of Richmond, called New-biggin, have the privilege, whatever it may be worth, of learning without the doctor's certificate when Death is about to come

* Vide Glossary to "Paracelsus on the Nature of Things." Eng. Trans.

† Contes Populaires, Préjuges, Proverbes, &c., p. 41. 8vo. Rouen. 1834.

for them. In that street,—and in that only—a white rabbit never fails to make his appearance in the dusk of the evening when any one of the inhabitants is about to die. It is not twenty years ago since the doomed, or rather dooming, rabbit appeared to the wife of a brazier by the name of Hayward, who had always been a heretic in such matters. His death convinced his neighbours how much he had been in error.

Lancashire.—On Pendle Hill, Clithero, stands *Malkin Tower*, that in 1633 was much celebrated as being the resort of witches; and at one time seventeen poor wretches were condemned for having held meetings there with the devil, though upon subsequent scrutiny the verdict was set aside and they had the good fortune to escape the hangman's clutches. A witness swore he saw them go into a barn and pull at six ropes, down which fell smoking flesh, butter in lumps, and milk as it were flying from the said ropes, all falling into six basons placed beneath.*

On the top of this hill, which is extensive and somewhat fenny, stand two large cairns about a mile distant from each other. Pennant conjectures that they were the ruins of some ancient *speculæ*, or beacon-towers, erected by Agricola after the conquest of the country.

Cornwall.—Mines are discovered by certain flint-stones, round and smooth, lying on the ground; but if we may believe the popular report, there is a more easy way, and that is by dreams, through which it is said works of great value have been found. Thus, in King Edward's time a gentlewoman, heiress to one Tresonliard, dreamed a handsome man told her that in such a tenement of her land she should find tin enough to enrich herself and her posterity. Her husband upon trial found a tin-work there, which in four years was worth to him almost four thousand pounds. And also one Taprel of Saint Neots by a

* See Webster on Witchcraft, p. 277.

dream of his daughter was wished to such a place, which he farmed, and found a tin-work that made him a rich man*—which stories, if true," adds Burton with great naivetè, " much credit women's dreams."

Midsummer Men.—This is an old name for the orpyne plant, or lesser house-leek. It grows abundantly on rocks and old walls, covering them with its little flowers in much profusion. Some of the sorts are small and yellow; others, white; and others again purple. An old writer† thus speaks of the superstition connected with them—" She would never go to bed on Midsummer Eve without sticking up in her room the well-known plant, called *Midsummer Men*, as the bending of the leaves to the right or the left would never fail to tell her whether her lover was true or false. I likewise stuck up two Midsummer Men, one for myself and one for him. Now if his had died away, we should never have come together, but I assure you his blowed and turned to mine."

Waff—Whiff—Swarth (Oral).—These are all names for the same thing, namely the Scotch *wraith*, and the Irish *fetch*. In Durham and Northumberland the two first of these terms are used to express the death-token; *swarth*, is, I believe, peculiar to Cumberland. It means the eidolon, or spectre, of any one about to die, and may be seen either by himself or others. In this last-named county it is a custom amongst the peasants to have a branch of the rowan-tree—pronounced *rawn*—hung up in their cottages as a spell against witches.

Thunder.—Aubrey tells us that it was the custom to invoke St. Barbara against thunder. According to the same unquestionable authority in all such matters, " they

* Burton's *Admirable Curiosities*, p. 29.

† I have in vain searched for his name, having in my memoranda made an erroneous reference to Peele's *Merry Jests*. The passage is probably to be found somewhere in Dekker.

did ring the great bell at Malmsbury Abbey, called *St. Adelm's Bell,* to drive away thunder and lightning. The like is yet used at the abbey of St. Germain's in Paris where they ring the great bell then." Chaucer in speaking of the "great hostesse" has an allusion, not over delicate, to this custom; and a more modern writer* says, "the tongue of the baptized bell made the ears of the affrighted demons ring with, *Raphael, sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.* These prayers," he adds, "are on the bells at St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall."

Fairy Darts.—"What that is, which the Irish call *uidad orchd* I do not perfectly understand, only that in English we term it a *fairy dart,* and the one passing by this name, which was shown me not long agoe, was so shaped as in the margent; the matterial of it I could not ghess, nor could others tell me what it was; but it was extreame hard and something brittle, the colour pale while having some resemblance to flint. It was so curiously wrought that I could not imagin by what art it might be done, having about the edges of it very small and round studs or prickles much like those that are about a lobster's claws. 'Twas found sticking in turf, and produced by one as a proof of the power fairies have to strike man or beast with some occult wound or distemper. And I have with my own eyes observed in a cow, which was said to be *elf-shott,* that towards her hind-quarter on one side of her the hide flagged inwards, and was sunck into a hole, which the cow-herd, who undertook the cure of her, said was the hole, which the dart made through the flesh and bowells notwithstanding the skin or hide remained sound

* Hogg in his "Fabulous History of Cornwall," a most amusing work, but unluckily it is by no means to be trusted, for it not only treats of fables, but is too often fabulous.

and entire without any hole in it; and withall showed me there was no such hole on the other side opposite, that I might not suppose it to be naturall. The cure he used, as near as I remember, was * * * * * * poured down her throat together with a certain hearb thrust into her jaws after it. This notable cow-chirurgeon was very secret in this other part of the cure and much wary lest I should know it, but a little of it happening to fall after him in the administration was found and shown me, which I perceived to be no other than ragg-wort, whereby the beast recovered.

"And lately I was told of a woman, who, some years agoe having a cow which was said to be elf-shot and died from her, there was found in the flesh of her, (being given to poore people for meat) a piece of a fairy dart, as they supposed it to be, which the woman keeps to this day, and makes use of as an amulett, which hath a medicinall virtue, as for other cows, so especially for the safe and sure bringing to bed of women. I have not yet found this woman, though I sought for her to the end only I might see that piece of dart."—Part of a Letter from Mr. J. K. fol. 24. M.S. Ayscough Catalogue, 4811.

* The remedy is too gross for repetition.

BAYLE AND HIS IMITATORS.*

The "Historical and Critical Dictionary" of Bayle is more interesting as a magazine of opinions than as a collection of facts, though even in this last respect it is not without very great value. It is a continuation of Moreri, and they who possess the former book on account of its historical matter, ought not to be without the work of his industrious predecessor. Bayle's critical castigations of Moreri are generally passed over by modern readers, as is the case with most personal satires, scarcely even excepting those of Dryden, Pope, or Churchill, the force of the venom dying with the object of it. The spirit of acrimony, thank Heaven, is seldom, if ever, immortal.

No antiquarian ever wasted more time and learning in settling the day and hour, whereon the foundation stone of an obscure parish church was laid, than Bayle has thrown away in correcting the petty chronological errors of Moreri. The most interesting conclusion from this feature of the "Historical and Critical Dictionary" is that patience of investigation and minuteness of knowledge may exist in a mind, which is rich in imagination, and

* It may be necessary to observe that this appeared in a Magazine, of which I was the editor a few years ago.

elegant in taste. But in parts also where he does not at all clash with Moreri, Bayle is exceedingly deficient in narrative matter. He omits, too, the lives of innumerable great characters of other nations; and often introduces people of no importance, merely for the sake of finding a vehicle in which some of his particular opinions may travel from his study into the world. It is not a work of systematic biography. There is for instance a life of Dante, but there are no notices of Petrarca and Ariosto. His omission of the lover of Laura is singular, for he had described with wonderful minuteness the real passion of Abelard and Heloise; and the case of Petrarca was a convenient opportunity for speculating on Platonic affection. The opinions in the dictionary are more numerous and interesting than the facts, for the author was a man of wonderful intellectual powers; he reflected deeply, and like the few men, the homines centenarii, who have done so, he found in his own mind all the germs of thought. Yet his borrowed knowledge was immense; a steady application and a retentive memory soon made him master of the facts, and a mind pliable to every shape readily associated itself with the opinions of former times. There are few of the subjects of religion, philosophy, and conduct that he has not examined, and always as it would seem with a perfect indifference to the issue of the investigation. He has none of those feelings of ardent love for his species, none of those longings after immortality, of which, as parts of the nature of man, no philosopher with all his assumption of impartiality ought to divest himself. No wonder that he is an advocate for unbounded toleration of opinion, for no man tried so severely the patience of society. Jeremy Taylor, in his "Liberty of Prophecying," had professed indulgence to all those who acknowledged the truth of the Apostles' Creed, although they differed on theological subjects not

mentioned in that symbol; John Locke, in his "Treatises on Toleration," excuses all variations of religious opinion except the errors of Popery; but Bayle's liberality of tolerance was without a limit. The circumstances of their lives, and their particular sentiments on some important subjects, naturally enough conducted them all to their respective conclusions on this subject.

But to return to the topic of the Pyrhonism of the Dictionary. No cause of heresy ever falls to the ground for want of ingenious support. The author states with firmness and strength the tenets of the Manicheans and the Spinozists; his replies show the folly of the religion of the one and of the philosophy of the other; but still he gives the mind no opinions to rest upon, for the futility of human reason is the conclusion to which all his arguments lead us. He does not allow himself even to repose on those probabilities, with which the academies of old were satisfied, much less would he acknowledge the wisdom of the schoolmen's practice of deciding as well as discussing. The dread of penal inflictions on himself for his indifference as to religion was obviously on the mind of Bayle, when writing most of his dictionary. He occasionally appeals to the Scriptures as if he were a faithful son of the Church; but his religious quotations are introduced so coldly, and with so little power, that the reader is continually reminded of those brief moral sentences which a novelist often thinks it decent should conclude a glowing description of voluptuousness. Bayle was as intimately acquainted with the historians and poets as with the philosophers of antiquity; and perhaps no author quotes with so much propriety. Horace seems to have been his favourite classic, for there was much similarity of taste between them, both being gay, good-humoured, witty, and elegant. In spite, however, of his intellectual polish, no man's imagination is more riotous

and prurient than that of Bayle. He is never so happy as when the task is to explain and describe an affair of love. Page after page of his work is full of arguments, suppositions, learned references to Ovid, Tibullus, Petronius, and Catullus; and the reader, while disgusted at his author's immorality, is astonished at his genius and learning. This part of the subject is exceedingly remarkable, for it is agreed on all hands that Bayle was only a speculator in the amorous science.

What the *Anatomy of Melancholy* was to the wits of Queen Anne's reign, the *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* was to the beaux esprits of France during the last century. Voltaire had so superficial an acquaintance with the classical languages that he could not of himself master the systems of ancient philosophy; nor did the pursuit of drawing-room applause at Paris leave this creature of vanity leisure for study or contemplation.* Books, however, were to be composed, for wit was fashionable; and a new jest, whether oral or written was occasionally necessary to dissipate the ennui of courts or to soften a monarch's frown. Infidelity, however, and immorality were the great subjects which were to be the foundation of every work. The marriages between the

* The hatred that this shallow Frenchman bore to Shakspeare—for shallow he was with all his wit—led him to adopt a system of meanness and falsehood that must stamp him with eternal infamy in the mind of every honest man. Having first pillaged the poet and drest himself up in the spoil, he afterwards attempted to destroy his reputation, just as the high-way robber of old used to knock his victim on the head lest he should at any time bear witness against him. I subjoin a reference to a few of his letters illustrative of this topic, as many may like to see what this idol of the French can bring forward in disparagement of Shakspeare, who would have very reasonable objections to wading through his voluminous writings. See the Letter to the Duke of Choiseul, Lett. 288, vol. 60, p. 512.—To Horace Walpole, Lett. 287, vol. 60. p. 505.—To H. Pancoucke, Lett. 224, vol. 60, p. 377.

French royal families and the princely houses of Italy had introduced into France those principles of infidelity which the exclusive love of classical literature had given birth to in Italy at the revival of letters. These principles were eagerly received and strongly supported in France because they suited well with the dissoluteness of the court. The powerful intellects of other times had only looked for applause from kindred minds; but the wits of the court of Louis the Fourteenth had no higher or better ambition than such fame as would be bestowed by the approbation of the great vulgar. In the one case literature dictated opinions, and men of wisdom taught the world, which then was contented to yield the proper place to merit; in the other case books were merely the echo of the prevailing taste; they were written to support it, and as it was corrupt and frivolous to a degree knowledge made no progress. By his cleverness and brilliancy Voltaire rose to be the head of those who thus degraded letters by following in the court-train and feeding all its follies. The light, thin soil of his mind could not afford subsistence to the tree of knowledge, which in his case put forth a few showy blossoms, but never ripened into fruit. Ideas must be sought somewhere, and Bayle's Dictionary was the fashionable work during Voltaire's youth. It was true that Le Clerc, and Jurien, and Jacquelot, had shown the superiority of truth over scepticism, but the wits admired the elegance of Bayle, while the ladies were delighted with his tales of gallantry, and in those days the ladies of France reigned with despotic sway over literature as well as over love. The apostle of scepticism therefore drew his principal weapons from the Dictionary, and his natural wit acquired a keener edge by communing thus closely with that of Bayle. He amplified his master's pointed sentences into elaborate systems, and by means of a lively fancy and a

remarkable facility of diction persuaded the world that his infidelity was the creation of his own genius.

But a more illustrious disciple of Bayle was one of our own countrymen, the elegant and accomplished Gibbon. From resolving to write the history of the city of Rome, the idea gradually expanded into the noble project of writing the History of the Decline and Fall of the whole Roman Empire. Much of this subject had already been traced in outline. Le Beau had given the French nation a history of the Lower Empire, in continuation of Crevier's History of the Roman Emperors. Every great man has had numerous biographers, and libraries were crowded with church annals. To read and study all the original authors on the events and opinions of more than twelve hundred busy years was a task beyond the industry of Gibbon, although he was keen and sagacious, and perhaps as learned as any gentleman-author can be, who spends his mornings in his library. He benefited very considerably by those writers of modern times who had devoted years to the investigation of particular parts of his grand subject, and of the numerous topics, which he has chosen to introduce as episodes. He had the skill of making other persons' learning appear to be his own, and, it is plain, only consulted original authorities upon points of moment, to which he knew the attention of the world would be more particularly directed. His occasional criticisms on Lardner make the uninformed reader suppose that his learning even surpassed that of the illustrious champion of dissent, while, in reality, it was Lardner who furnished him with most of his facts concerning the early Christians, though, by comparing Lardner's statements with those of Tillemont, Dupin and Fleury, he might occasionally discover differences, and be enabled to give critical decisions between the combatants. In all literary opinions, Gibbon was a

Frenchman; and it is only from the circumstance of most Englishmen possessing but a very slight acquaintance with French literature that he was ever thought to be an original writer. No man borrowed so freely as Gibbon from the French compilers of memoirs, and it may with truth be said, that, while reading the Decline and Fall, we are often only being amused with an elegant version of the Abbe Bleterie, Petit de la Croix, and other authors of the same description. The very sum and substance of the papers in the Transactions of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres are to be found in the Decline and Fall. Even those, who may not be able to trace the historian's elegant plagiarisms, must yet be aware that the idiom of his work is much more French than English, and that his style is by no means a fitting object of imitation. In the last century infidelity was a fashionable qualification amongst men of literature, an assumed badge that distinguished knowledge from ignorance, and not an honest conviction. In the case of Gibbon, Bayle supplied all the quibbles and sophistries on the subject of religion, and these appear, sometimes in the text of the Decline and Fall when they are dressed up in all the pomp of history, and sometimes in the notes when they are sharpened into epigrams. But Gibbon was a man of cold temperament, and altogether wanted that enthusiasm in scepticism which distinguished his master. There are fanatical sceptics, and superstitious atheists, and it is often an even point which is the worst, the bigotry of unbelief, or the bigotry of religion. While Bayle was a Pyrhonist in all things, his disciple was satisfied with endeavouring to destroy the Christian religion. Both the master and the scholar laboured with incessant diligence to show that the Christians had always been poor, timid, pitiable beings; and that in the multitude of theological opinions truth was

not to be found. It was from the same source that Gibbon drew most of his materials for attacking morals, for a leading characteristic of the Dictionary is licentiousness, although there is much difference in their way of management. Bayle speaks of love with the curiosity of a natural philosopher and the elegance of a lettered mind. Gibbon shows the brutality, and not the mental sensibility, of the passion; but when he happens to throw round his subject the graces of elegant fiction, those graces are always borrowed from the curious disquisitions in Bayle. To Voltaire also the historian is largely indebted, and they who have waded through these voluminous authors must easily remember moments when they have been struck with identity both of thought and diction. To establish the truth of this assertion it would be requisite to give examples far beyond my limits, and perhaps as far beyond the patience of most readers. Judgments of this nature are the slowly formed results of long and patient study, the conclusions being often more a matter of feeling than the single consequence of any particular instance of similitude.

But if Bayle has turned half-thinkers into free-thinkers, he has also helped to enlighten men of real talent. When Tonson, the bookseller, used to wait on Addison for his Spectators, he always found Bayle lying open upon the table. Johnson was accustomed to praise the Dictionary for the account given in it of the biographical part of literature, yet Addison was pious, and Johnson was both pious and learned, and either extracted the honey from the flower while he left behind the poison. It would have been well for D'Israeli, when tracing the literary character, if he had followed their example, for he would have drawn more substantial information from Bayle than from Gassendi's Life of Pieresa, or the many obscure authors,—obscure because they are worthless,—whom he is so fond

of following. Bayle traced conduct to its motives, and would have guided Mr. D'Israeli to the reasons as well as to the facts of his several subjects. Rousseau is the hero of Mr. D'Israeli's pages, and men of letters are exceedingly obliged to a writer, who draws the literary character from the life of a madman; yet surely Plotinus,* as described by Bayle, would have been a better figure in his picture, if he was resolved that eccentricity should stand for wisdom. The Platonic philosopher was at least a good man, while the contributor to impiety to the Foundling Hospital at Paris seems to have been the very opposite.

* Plotinus flourished in the third century, and belonged to the Platonic school of philosophy, his whole life being spent in a visionary attempt to make the mind independent of the body and to elevate man as nearly as possible to the Deity. The Calvinistic spirit of modern times is but another form of the same folly, which neglects the real and the sensible for a dreamy something, which exists but in the imaginations of religious enthusiasts, who fancy they are worshipping the Creator by contempt of his gifts. To such an extent did Plotinus carry this doctrine, that he professed himself ashamed of being lodged in a body, having so profound a contempt for everything material in him that he would never suffer his picture to be drawn. How childish does all this seem by the side of the Baconian philosophy, the most inestimable gift that was ever bestowed by man upon his fellow-creatures.

THE MONTHS—MAY.

MAY was called by our Saxon ancestors *Tri-milki*, because in that month they began to milk their kine three times in the day.*

Every year on this day met the *folkmote* of our Saxon ancestors—the annual parliament, as it is explained by Spelman, or convention of the bishops, thanes, aldermen, and freemen, in which the laymen having first sworn to defend one another and conjointly with the king maintain the laws of the realm, then proceeded to consult of the common safety.

The modern name of the month is from the Latin Maius, or Majus, which itself has been variously derived, and occasioned much dispute, as Macrobius tells us, amongst the Roman writers. According to one account it was called *Majus* from *Majores*, the elders, just as the month of June had its name from *Juniores*, the younger, these appellations having been respectively given in honour of the two great masses into which Romulus had divided the Roman people,—namely the elders and the juniors,—

* *Verstegan's Restitution of Decayed Intelligence*, p. 66. London, 1673.

the one being appointed to maintain the republic by their counsels, and the other by their arms. Cincius however imagines that the name was derived from Maia, whom he calls the wife of Vulcan, while Piso contends that the goddess in question was called *Majesta,* and not *Maia,* whom others call the mother of Mercury. Some again derive it from Jupiter, called *Majus* from his Majesty; and not a few have maintained that the Maia, to whom sacrifices were made in May, was the Earth, so named from its magnitude, as in the sacred rites she is called *Mater Magna,* the *Great Mother.* The plain inference from all these argumentary suppositions is that neither Varro, nor Cincius, nor Macrobius, nor any of the authors cited by him, knew a jot more of the matter than ourselves.*

It may now be said to be spring to the feelings as

* "*Majum* Romulus tertium posuit, de cujus nomine inter auctores lata dissensio est; nam Fulvius Nobilior in FASTIS, quos in æde Herculis Musarum posuit, Romulum dicit, postquam populum in majores junioresque divisit, ut altera pars consilio, altera armis rempublicam tueretur, in honorem utriusque partis hunc *Majum,* sequentem *Junium,* vocasse. Sunt qui hunc mensem ad nostros fastos a Tusculanis transisse commemorant; apud quos nunc quoque vocatur *Deus Majus,* qui est Jupiter, a magnitudine scilicet ac majestate dictus. Cincius mensem nominatum putat a *Maja,* quam Vulcani dicit uxorem; argumentoque utitur, quod flamen Vulcanalis Kalendis Majis huic deæ rem divinam facit. Sed Piso uxorem Vulcani *Majestam,* non *Majam* dicit vocari. Contendunt alii *Majam,* Mercurii matrem, mensi nomen dedisse, hinc maxime probantes quod hoc mense mercatores omnes Majæ pariter Mercurioque sacrificant. Affirmant quidam, quibus Cornelius Labeo consentit, hanc Majam, cui mense Majo res divina celebratur, terram esse, hoc adeptum nomen a magnitudine sicut et *Mater Magna* in sacris vocatur."—*Macrobii Saturnal,* lib. i. cap. xii.

If however we may believe the authorities, cited by the learned Vossius (*De Origine et Progressu Idolatriæ,* lib. i. cap. xii. p. 37, folio), the Bona Dea was addicted to drunkenness, and upon one oc-

well as according to the strict letter of the almanac. The garden begins to put on its gayest robe of flowers; the *male orchis* with its purple pyramids; *narcissi* of various sorts; the *garden-squill;* the *narrow-leaved peony*, beautiful, but short lived, in its blowing; the *globe-flower; Solomon's seal;* the *lily of the valley;* the *asphodel;* the *monkey-poppy; ground ivy;* the *fleur-de-lis;* the *speedwell;* the *creeping crowsfoot;* the *wall hawkweed;* and many others—till, towards the end of the month, the list of them would require a volume.*

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casion got well whipt for draining a flask in the temple against her husband's knowledge. "Sed quam malè tanta pudicitia, a Varrone memorata, convenit cum ejus ebrietate, de quâ sic ex Sexto Clodio scribit Arnobius in sexto;—Faunam igitur Fatuam, *Bona* quæ dicitur *Dea*, transeamus; quam myrteis cæsam virgis, quòd marito nesciente, seriam meri ebiberit plenam, Sextus Clodius indicat sexto de diis Græcorum."

* The following is a brief index to the Vernal Flora.

Common Peony.	Yellow Asphodel.
Slender-leaved Peony.	Columbine.
Crimson Peony.	Great Star of Bethlehem.
Dwarf Peony.	Peruvian Squill.
Tulip in many varieties.	Yellow Azalea.
Welsh Poppy.	Scarlet Azalea.
Pale Poppy.	Purple Goatsbeard.
European Globeflower.	Yellow Goatsbeard.
Asiatic Globeflower.	Motherwort.
Bachelor's Buttons.	Great Leopard's Bane.
Lurid Iris.	Lesser Leopard's Bane.
Hock Gilliflower.	Female Orchis.

In the fields we have the following.

Meadow Lychnis.	Stichwort.
Campion Lychnis.	Yellow Water-Lily.
Mousear Scorpion-Grass.	White Water-Lily.
Our Lady's-Smock.	Harebell.
Bitter Lady's Smock.	Bulbous Crowfoot.
Hedge Geranium.	Creeping Crowfoot.
Kidlock.	Upright Meadow Crowfoot.
Charlock.	Rough Crowfoot.

The five last-mentioned flowers absolutely carpet the fields with yellow.

In regard to the Fauna, little can be added except that the swallows and martins begin to be common; the nightingales now sing both night and day; glow-worms may be occasionally seen in the evening; the green May-bug, burnished with gold, and the brown cock-chafer are abundant; and generally the birds are in full song.

The festival of May-day has existed in this country, though its form has often changed, from the earliest times; and we find abundant traces of it both in our poets and old chroniclers.* Tollet imagines that it originally came from our Gothic ancestors; and certainly, if that is to be taken for a proof, the Swedes and Goths welcomed the first of May with songs and dance, and many rustic sports;† but there is only a general, not a parti-

* Thus Shakspeare in *Henry* VIII. act v. scene iii.

"'Tis as much impossible
To scatter them as 'tis to make them sleep
On a May-morning."

So too Chaucer in his *Court of Love.*

† In *Olaus Magnus* we read "Postquam Septêtrionales populi communiter à principio Octobris ad finem Aprilis asperrimas hyemes et longissimas noctes, sævosque flatus, pruinas, nives, caligines, tempestates, immensaque frigora, et reliquas sævientium elementorum mutationes, quasi concessa solatia alacriter transierant, mos est diversus in gentibus illis remotissimè distantibus, nempe quòd redeuntem solis splendorem singulari tripudio, præcipuè versus Polum Arcticum habitantes, excipere soleant. Qui enim montosa sublimioraque loca incolunt mutuis conviviis gaudia multiplicantes exultant, eò quòd uberior redit venatio et piscatura." *Olaus Magnus de Gentium Septentrionalium Conditionibus*, lib. xv. cap. viii. et seq. p. 571. The author then goes on to detail a custom, which has nothing whatever to do with May-day in England. "Alius ritus est ut primo die Maii, sole per Taurum agente cursum, duplices a magistratibus urbium constituantur robustorum juvenum et virorum equestres turmæ seu cohortes, tanquam ad durum aliquem conflictum progressuræ, quarum altera sorte deputato duce dirigitur, qui hyemis titulo et habitu, variis indutus pellibus, hastisque focalibus armatus, globatas nives et crus-

cular, likeness between our May-day festivities and those of our Gothic ancestors. Others again have sought for the origin of our customs in the *Floralia*, or rather in the *Maiuma* of the Romans, which were established at a later period under the Emperor Claudius, and differed perhaps but little from the former, except in being more decent.*

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tatas glacies spargens ut frigora prolonget, obequitat victoriosus, eoque duriorem se simulat et efficit, quò ab vaporariis stiriæ glaciales dependere videntur. Rursumque alterius cohortis præfectus æstatis, Comes Florialis appellatus, virentibus arborum frondibus, foliisque et floribus (difficulter repertis) vestitus, æstialibus indumentis parum securis; ex campo cum ducet hyemali, licet separato loco et ordine, civitates ingrediuntur, hastisque edito spectaculo publico, quòd æstas hyemem exuperet, experiuntur." The substance of all which in brief is, that it was a custom among the Southern Swedes on the first of May, for two parties of youths to take upon them respectively the characters of winter and summer. The one clad in furs flung about ice and snow in order to prolong the winter, while the other was led on by their Captain Florio, who was lightly dressed, with boughs and leaves, and then commenced a battle between them, which of course ended in summer being the victor.

* The festival of the Maiuma originated probably at Ostia, a city on the sea-coast at the mouth of the Tiber, where the goddess Flora seems to have been more particularly worshipped, from her supposed power of calming the sea and rendering the winds mild and favourable. It is thus described by Suidas: "Πανήγυρις ἤγετο ἐν τῇ Ρώμῃ κατα τόν Μαΐον μῆνα. Τὴν παράλιον καταλαμβάνοντες πόλιν, τὴν λεγομένην Ὀστίαν, οἱ τα πρῶτα τῆς Ῥώμης τελοῦντες, ἡδυπαθεῖν ἠνείχοντο ἐν τοῖς θαλαττίοις ὕδασιν ἀλλήλους ἐμβάλλοντες. Ὅθεν καὶ Μαϊουμᾶς ὁ τῆς τοιαύτης ἑορτῆς καιρὸς ὠνομάζετο." (Suidas, p. 2375, sub voce *Μαϊουμας*, folio. Oxonii, 1834.) That is, "Maiumas was a Roman festival held in the month of May, when the heads of the city, going off to the sea-town called Ostia, gave themselves up to pleasure, and amused themselves with throwing each other into the sea. Hence the time of that festival was called Maiuma."

This festival was celebrated with much splendour, both in banquets and in offerings, as we are told by the Emperor Julian, in

But though it may at first seem probable that our May-games may have come immediately from the Floralia, or Maiuma of the Romans,* there can be little question that their final origin must be sought in other countries, and

his satirical address, the Misopogon, to the people of Antioch, and in time it appears to have degenerated so deeply into licentiousness that it was suppressed, so far as laws could suppress it, in the reign of Constantine, together with the feasts of Pan and Bacchus. Under the united rule of Arcadius and Honorius, it was restored, though with caution, the imperial mandate declaring, "clementiæ nostræ placuit ut Maiumæ provincialibus lætitia reddatur; ita tamen ut servetur honestas, et verecundia castis moribus perseveret." Imp. Cod. lib. xi. tit. 45. The admonition, however, in regard to decency and sobriety, does not seem to have produced any very desirable effect upon the minds of the people, for in the same reign it was once more forbidden on the plea of licentiousness by a rescript to the prefect Aurelian, which is still extant in the Theodosian Code, (lib. xv. tit. vi.) It is, however, plain, that though the Maiuma might be condemned by the edicts of emperors and the fulminations of saints—Chrysostom had particularly distinguished himself in this holy war against the popular amusement—still it could not be entirely repressed, for in the year 1573, we find the Council of Milan indulging in a furious tirade against the abomination of raising Maypoles, a pretty decisive evidence that the Maiuma had not been extirpated. But neither were the Roman clergy of the 16th century more successful than their predecessors had been; the detested Maypole was not to be put down, but has descended to our own days.

* It may be as well, now I am upon this subject, to mention that the Romans had an absurd tradition of their May-games, their Floralia, or Larentalia, (Laurentalia) as they called them, having been derived from a prostitute named Flora or Larentia. The tale was this:—It chanced one day, in the reign of Ancus, that the keeper of Hercules' temple, finding the time hang heavy on his hands for want of occupation, took it into his head to challenge the god to a game of dice—the loser to pay the penalty of a good supper and to supply his victor with what Peele or Decker would have called a croshabell. Hercules being, we may suppose, in a good humour, accepted this challenge from his door-keeper, and won the game as might have been expected, whereupon he received his reward in meal and malt, and

far remoter periods. Maurice* says, and I have no doubt truly, that our May-day festival is but a repetition of the phallic festivals of India and Egypt, which in those countries took place upon the sun entering Taurus, to celebrate nature's renewed fertility. Φαλλος in Greek signifies *a pole*, in addition to its more important meaning, of which this is the type; and in the precession of the equinoxes and the changes of the calendar we shall find an easy solution of any apparent inconsistencies arising from the difference of seasons. For obvious reasons I can do no more than hint at these mysteries, which besides would require a volume for their full discussion.

That the May festival has come down to us from the Druids, who themselves had it from India, is proved by many striking facts and coincidences, and by none more than the vestiges of the God, *Bel*,† the Apollo or Orus of other nations. The Druids celebrated his worship on the first of May, by lighting immense fires in honour of him upon the various carns,‡ and hence the day is called

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the possession of Larentia. But Hercules, though he might not have played upon the square, was yet in the main a liberal fellow, and the next morning, after the manner of gods and fairies, he bestowed a boon upon the lady,—it was, that the first person she met when returning home should prove of great advantage to her. And so it happened; for she met a rich man, by name Carucius, who was so smitten by her beauty, that he married her, and upon his death bequeathed to her the whole of his immense wealth. This she eventually left to the Roman people, in requital of which act of munificence King Ancus bestowed upon her a handsome funeral, ordered sacrifices to be offered to her *manes*, and a festival to be dedicated to Jove, because the ancients believed that the soul was given by him, and returned to him after death. This story will be found in the first book of the *Saturnalia of Macrobius*, vol. i. p. 241. Edit. Biponti, 1788.

* Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 87.

† Bel was variously called Beal, Bealan, Belus, Belenus, and Baal.

‡ Toland's *History of the Druids*, p. 115. 8vo. Montrose.

by the aboriginal Irish and the Scotch Highlanders—both remnants of the Celtic stock—la BEALTINE, BEALTAINE, or BELTINE, that is, the *day of Belen's fire;* for, in the Cornish, which is a Celtic dialect, we find that TAN is fire, and *to tine*, signifies to light the fire. The Irish still retain the Phenician custom of lighting fires at short distances, and making the cattle pass between them.* Fathers too, taking their children in their arms, jump or run through them, thus passing the latter, as it were, through the flames, the very practice so expressly condemned in Scripture.† But even this custom appears to have been only a substitute for the atrocious sacrifice of children, as practiced by the elder Phœnicians. The God, Saturn—that is, Moloch—was represented by a statue bent slightly forward, and so placed that the least weight was sufficient to alter its position. Into the arms of this idol the priest gave the child to be sacrificed, when, its balance being thus destroyed, it flung, or rather dropt, the victim into a fiery furnace that blazed below.‡ If other proof were wanting of Eastern origin, we might find them in the fact that Britain was called by the earlier inhabitants the ISLAND OF BELI,§ and that BEL had also the name of HU, a word which we see again occurring in the *Huli* festival of India.‖

* Higgin's *Celtic Druids*, chap. v. sect. 23. p. 181.

† "And made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abomination of the heathen." 2 Kings, xvi. 3.

‡ There is an able article on this subject in the *British and Foreign Quarterly Review* for April, 1844, No. xxxiii. p. 61.

§ Thus in one of the Welsh TRIADS, a collection of aphorisms, supposed to be of great antiquity, we read: "sincerely I worship thee, Beli, giver of good, and Manhogan the king, who preserves the honours of Bel, the *island of Beli*." Davies' *Celtic Researches*, p. 191, 8vo. London, 1806.

‖ For an account of the Huli festival, see *Asiatic Researches*, vol. ii. p. 334.

When Christianity found its way into Britain, the same mode would seem to have been adopted in regard to the May-games by the wise liberality of the first missionaries, that we see them employing in so many other cases. Conceding to the prejudices of the people, they did not attempt to root out long-established characters, but invested them with another character, as bees close in with wax the noxious substance they are unable to remove. Thus in process of time the festival was not only diverted from its original intention, but even the meaning of its various symbols was forgotten. It degenerated into a mere holiday, and as such long continued to be the delight of all ages and of all classes, from kings and queens upon the throne to the peasant in his cottage.* But amusement and crime seem in the minds of some people to be very nearly allied, and we find Stubbes, that admirable specimen of his tribe, actually foaming at the mouth when descanting on the real or imaginary enormities of May-day. "Against Maie, Whitsondaie, or some other tyme of the yeare, every parishe, towne, or village, assemble themselves together, bothe men, women, and children, olde and yonge, even all indifferently; and either goyng all together, or devyding themselves into companies, they goe, some to the woodes and groves, some to the hilles and mountaines, some to one place, some to an other, where they spende all the night in pleasant pastymes; and in the mornyng they returne, bringing with them birch bowes and braunches of trees to deck their assemblies

* Thus in Chaucer's *Courte of Love*,

"And forth goth al the courte both most and lest
To fetche the flouris fresh, and braunch, and blome,
And namely hawthorn brought both page and grome."
v. 1432.

Henry the Eighth and Queen Katherine, as we shall see presently, used to go a-maying.

withall. And no marvaile; for there is a great lord present amongst them as superintendent and lorde over their pastymes and sportes; namely Sathan, prince of hell. But their cheefest jewell they bring from thence is their *Maie poole*, which they bringe home with greate veneration, as thus: They have twentie or fourtie yoke of oxen, every oxe havyng a sweete nosegaie of flowers tyed on the tippe of his hornes; and these oxen drawe home this Maie poole—this stinking idoll rather—which is covered all over with flowers and herbes bounde rounde aboute with stringes, from the top to the bottome, and sometyme painted with variable colours, with twoo or three hundred mē, women, and children followyng it with greate devotion. And thus beyng reared up, with handkerchēifes and flagges streamyng on the toppe, they strawe the grounde aboute, binde greene boughes about it, sett up sommer haulles, bowers, and arbours hard by it. And then fall they to banquet and feast, to leape and daunce aboute it, as ỹ heathen people did at the dedication of their idolles, whereof this is a perfect patterne, or rather the thyng itself. I have heard it credibly reported, —and that vivâ voce—by men of great gravitie, credite, and reputation, that of fourtie, threescore, or a hundred maides goyng to the woode over night, there have scarcely the third parte of them returned home againe undefiled."*

It is curious enough to contrast the effusions of this rabid fanatic with the pleasing picture of the same custom left to us by Stowe. "In the moneth of May," says the cheerful old man, "namely on May-day in the morning, every man, except impediment, would walke into the sweete meadows and greene woods, there to rejoyce their spirites with the beauty and savour of

* *Anatomie of Abuses*, folio 54. 12mo. London, 1585.

sweete flowers, and with the harmony of birds praysing God in their kind; and for example hereof Edward Hall hath noted that K. Henry the Eight, as in the 3 of his reigne and divers other years, so namely on the seventh of his reigne on May-day in the morning with Queene Katheren his wife, accompanied with many Lords and Ladies, rode a Maying from Greenwitch to the high ground of Shooter's hill, where as they passed by the way they espied a company of tall yeomen clothed all in Greene, with greene whoodes and with bowes and arrowes to the number of 100. One being their chieftaine was called Robin Hoode, who required the king and his companie to stay and see his men shoote, whereunto the king graunting, Robin Hoode whistled, and all the 200 archers shot off losing all at once; and when he whistled againe, they likewise shot againe; their arrowes whistled by craft of the head, so that the noyse was strange and loude, which greatly delighted the king, queene, and their companie."*

It may seem strange that Robin Hood should be so prominent a figure in a festival, which originated long before he was born, since we first find mention of him and his forest companions in the reign of King John, while the Floral games of England, as we have seen, had their rise with the Druids, whose connection with the East we have elsewhere noticed. But this knot may be untied without much difficulty. The sports of Robin Hood were no doubt first instituted for the encouragement of archery, and there is little to surprize us if a recreation, so especially connected with summer and the forest, was celebrated in the opening of the year—the opening that is so far as it related to rural sports and pleasures. By degrees it would naturally

* *Stow's Survey of London*, p. 99, 4to. 1603.

enough become blended with the festival already existing, and in a short time from its superior attractions it would become the principal feature of it; for, as we shall presently see, a May-day festival consisted of various sports, derived from different sources, and having no bond of union beyond a common relation to the season.

In the earlier periods it had ever been the custom to elect a *Lord and Lady of the May*, who in all likelihood presided over the sports, the *Lady* being unquestionably a descendant of the Goddess Flora, while the *Lord* was the addition of after times; the giving to her such an associate was the natural result of her ceasing to be worshipped as a deity. But in the sixteenth century the names of Robin Hood and his companions had become exceedingly popular, the ballads, which recounted their exploits, being for ever in the mouths of the people, while archery was the delight of all classes; men besides were still too much accustomed to acts of violence to regard lawlessness as any very grievous moral offence, although they might visit it with punishment; a depredator therefore of the Robin Hood species, who was brave, generous, and skilful almost to a miracle in the use of the national weapon, was looked upon not so much as a criminal as a gallant enemy, who was to be destroyed if possible, but who was not the less a subject of admiration; and hence by a process intelligible enough, though we are no longer able to trace the details, Robin Hood became the *Lord*, and Maid Marian the *Lady of the May* while their companions grouped about them, and helped to give a sort of rude dramatic character to the festival.

Clear as this theory is—as clear as any theory can be that will not admit of positive proof—it has been disputed. Mr. Douce says, "the introduction of Robin

Hood into the celebration of May probably suggested the addition of a king or lord of May."* One would think that common sense alone, without any help from research, was sufficient to show the fallacy of such a notion; but to set the question beyond all doubt we have mention of a king in the popular sports long before the time of Robin Hood's introduction.†

It is in the same spirit that he observes of Maid Marian, "none of the materials that constitute the more authentic history of Robin Hood, prove the existence of such a character in the shape of his mistress." I must confess I do not understand what he means by "more authentic records." The whole life of Robin Hood, as we have it,‡ is a mere legendary tradition, the theme of plays and ballads, and though Maid Marian is never mentioned in the latter, it is surely quite enough that we find her recorded in the two old plays of *The death and downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington*, written before 1600, and also in other dramatic compositions about the same period. But Mr. Douce, though a man of much research, was not particularly remarkable for clearness or length of vision.

At the same time, it must in common fairness be remarked that Warton, a high authority, seems to have entertained something of the same idea, for he observes

* *Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol ii. p. 454.

† Thus we find that a strict command was given in the Synod at Worcester, A.D. 1240. Can. 38, "ne intersint ludis inhonestis, nec sustineant ludos fieri de REGE ET REGINA." *Kennett's Parochial Antiquities*—Glossary—sub voce *Arietum Levatio*, 4to. Oxford. 1695.

‡ Of course it will be understood that my remark is limited to the life and doings of the merry outlaw, and not to Robin Hood as Earl of Huntington, for whom the antiquarians have made out a pedigree, which I have no doubt is as true as half the pedigrees in England.

that the name of Marian might have been suggested by a French Pastoral Drama of the eleventh or twelfth century, in which Robin and Marian, a shepherd and shepherdess, are the principal characters. This piece, called *Le Jeu de Berger et de la Bergere*, was highly popular amongst the French, and it must he admitted that there is something startling in the juxta-position of the two names, but here all likeness ends; there is nothing else in common to the French Pastoral and the English May-games. I am inclined therefore to think that the coincidence is merely accidental.

But however this may be, it would appear as if with the decline of archery this part of the May-games declined also and became a merely grotesque exhibition. Marian, the queen, or *Lady of the May*, degenerated into Malkin, and was personated by a clown; many of the characters dropt off—Friar Tuck does not appear after the time of Elizabeth—and the game, now a mere burlesque, was not confined to May-day, but was transferred to Whitsuntide, and bride-ales, and other festivals.

The next class of May-day festivals to be considered is the *Morris-dance*, of which Robin Hood and his companions often, but not always, nor of necessity, formed the principal characters. It is generally supposed to be of Moorish origin, and to be derived to us from Spain. Hence its name. And in confirmation of this opinion we are told by Junius, that at one time the dancers blackened their faces to resemble Moors.* Strutt indeed, thinks differently; but his arguments, which are not very strong in themselves, seem to be altogether set aside by the fact of the word, *Morris*, being applied in

* "Faciem plerumquo inficiunt fuligine, et peregrinum vestium cultum assumunt, qui ludicris talibus indulgent, ut Mauri esse videantur, aut è longius remotâ patriâ credantur advolasse." *F. Junii Etymologicum Anglicanum, sub voce.*

the same way by other nations to express a dance, that both English and foreign glossaries alike ascribe to the Moors. That the dance is not exactly the same with us as the fandango, the real Morisco, can by no means be considered as invalidating this argument, for similar deviations from originals have taken place in other borrowed amusements. Mr. Douce well exemplifies this by the alterations made in the games of chess and cards, both of which, it is generally agreed, were invented in India or China.

Some again would derive this dance from the *Pyrrhica Saltatio* of the Romans, the military dance of their Salii, or priests of Mars, which in all probability originated with the Greeks. That the Pyrrhica saltatio has descended to modern times is beyond all question. We have it, or had it, a few years since, amongst ourselves under the name of the SWORD DANCE, and it still exists in France as the *dance* of fools or Mattachins, "who were habited in short jackets with gilt paper helmets, long streamers tied to their shoulders, and bells to their legs; they carried in their hands a sword and buckler, with which they made a clashing noise, and performed various quick and sprightly evolutions."* But, notwithstanding some points of similarity, the sword-dance and the morris-dance are not the same, and their names as well as character denote their respective origin.

From whatever source the Morris-dance may have been derived, it would seem to have been first brought into England about the time of Edward the Third, when John of Gaunt returned from Spain. The principal characters of it generally, though not always, were Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Scarlet, Stokesley, Little John, the Hobby Horse, the Bavian or Fool, Tom the

* *Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare*, vol. ii. p. 435.

Piper, with his pipe and tabor, the Dragon, of which last we have no mention before the time of the fanatic Stubbes,*—that is not before 1585. But it must be distinctly understood that the number of characters varied much at different times and places—so much so indeed that it is impossible to give anything like an accurate account of all the changes. "Sometimes," says Douce, "we have a Lady of the May simply, with a Friar Tuck; in later times a Maid Marian remained without even a Robin Hood or a Friar;" and the hobby-horse was often omitted;† either from design or accident, even

* Stubbes is bad enough of all conscience, but he had plenty of fanatics to keep him in countenance, as absurd and as sour-faced to the full as he could be. Thus Fetherstone (*Dialogue agaynst light, lewde, and lascivious dancing*: 1582, 12mo. sig. D. 7.) as quoted by the indefatigable Douce, says, "The abuses, which are committed in your May-games are infinite. The first whereof is this, that you doe use to attyre in woman's apparrell whom you doe most commonly call *May-marrions*, whereby you infringe that straight commandement, whiche is given in Deut. xxii. 5, that men must not put on women's apparrell for feare of enormities. Nay, I myself, have seene in a May-game, a troupe, the greater part whereof hath been men, and yet have they been attyred so like unto women, that theyr faces being hidde (as they were indeede) a mane couldo not discerne them from women. The second abuse, which of all other is the greatest, is this, that it hath been toulde that your morris-dancers have daunced naked in nettes; what greater entisement unto naughtiness could have been devised? The third abuse is that you (because you will loose no tyme) doe use commonly to runne into woodes in the night time, amongst maidens, to fet bowes, in so muche, as I have hearde, of tenne maidens, which went to fet May, nine of them came home with childe." The good old times, as some choose to call them, were no doubt exceedingly profligate, but they can scarcely have been so bad as represented by the fanatic cotemporaries.

† *Clod.* They should be morris-dancers by their gingle, but they have no napkins.

Cockrel. No, nor a hobby-horse.

Clod. Oh, *he's often forgotten*, that's no rule; but there is no Maid Marian nor Friar amongst them, which is the surer mark.

when Maid Marian, the Friar, and the Bavian or fool were continued in it. Other figures also occasionally mingled with them, as appears from Tollett's window, such as Flemings, Spaniards, a Morisco, &c.; but there is too much uncertainty as to the actual meaning of these figures to warrant our drawing any conclusions.

In regard to the costume of these characters, *that* also varied, and seems in some instances to have followed the fashion of the day. Fortunately we are able to give a very good general idea of it from the account Mr. Tollett has left us of a stained or painted window,* which appears from time immemorial to have ornamented a room in his house at Betley in Staffordshire, but to which there belongs no tradition.

Maid Marian.—Golden crown on her head; in her left hand, a flower, seemingly a pink, as the emblem of summer; purple coif; surcoat, blue; cuffs, white; skirts of her robe, yellow; sleeves, carnation; stomacher, red, with a yellow lace in cross bars.

Friar Tuck.—Full clerical tonsure; in his right hand chaplet of white and red beads; corded red girdle, ornamented with a golden twist and tassel of the same; russet habit, denoting him to be of the Franciscan order, or one of the grey friars, so called from the colour of

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Cockrel. Nor a fool that I see.

B. Jonson's Gipsies Metamorphosed, vol. vii. p. 397, Gifford's edition.

And again:

"But see the hobby-horse is forgot.
Fool, it must be your lot
To supply his want with faces
And some other buffoon graces."

The Satyr—Id. vol. vi. p. 483.

* This account will be found at full length in the appendix to *Shakespeare's Henry IV.* part i. *Steeven's ed.* 1803.

their garments; stockings, red; a wallet, hanging from his girdle, for the reception of provisions.

The Fool.—In his hand the bauble, which is yellow; on his head a coxcomb-hood with ass' ears, the top of the hood rising into the form of a cock's neck and head, with a bell at the latter; it is blue, guarded or edged with yellow at its scalloped bottom; doublet, red, striped across, or rayed, with a deeper red, and edged with yellow; girdle, yellow; left side hose, yellow, with a red shoe; right side hose, blue, soled with red leather.

Tom Piper.—Bonnet, red, faced or turned up with yellow; doublet, blue; sleeves, blue, turned up with yellow, something like muffetees at his wrists; over his doublet a red garment like a short cloak with arm-holes, and with a yellow cape; hose, red, and garnished across and perpendicularly on the thighs with a narrow yellow lace.

The Hobby-horse.—It is hardly necessary to explain that the hobby-horse was represented by a man equipped with as much pasteboard as was sufficient to form the head and hinder parts of a horse, the quadrupedal defects being concealed by a long mantle or foot-cloth that nearly touched the ground; the man's legs stood for those of the horse, while his own were represented by two stuffed legs fastened at the sides; but this modern sort of centaur may still be seen upon the stage in various burlesques, and must therefore be familiar to most of our readers. Its appearance in ancient times may be thus described: The colour of the horse was a reddish white, like the blossom of a peach-tree; in the horse's mouth was a ladle,* ornamented with a ribbon,

* In later times, it would seem that the fool held the ladle; thus in Nashe's old play of SUMMER'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT—"*Ver goes in, and fetcheth out the Hobby-horse and the morris daunce, who daunce about.*

to receive the spectators' pecuniary donations; crimson foot-cloth fretted with gold; golden bit; purple bridle with a golden tassel, and studded with gold; the rider's mantel purple, with a golden border latticed with purple; crown of gold; purple cap with a red feather; coat, or doublet, yellow on the right side, and red on the left with buttons.* He was evidently a juggler, and played off legerdemain tricks, for the amusement of the populace, as appears by the sword in his cheeks in this painting, and also by many scattered hints in the old dramatists, more particularly Ben Jonson.

In later times—that is to say, about the reign of Henry the Eighth—the Morris-dancers wore dresses of gilt leather and silver paper, and sometimes coats of white, spangled fustian, with streamers fluttering from the sleeves.† They had garters also about the knees, to which bells were attached, and carried purses at their girdles. Sometimes too they had bells on each leg to the number of twenty or forty, and sometimes they jingled them in the hands. The allusions to such customs are frequent in our old writers for the stage. It was also usual for the characters to decorate their hats with a nosegay, or with the herb, *thrift*, formerly called *our Lady's cushion*. Thus Soto, in WOMEN PLEASED, says, when rebuking one of his subordinates for coming before him *unmorriced*,

"Where are your bells then?
Your rings, your ribons, friend, and your clean napkin?
Your nosegay in your hat?"‡

"VER. About, about, lively, put your horse to it, reyne him harder, jerke him with your wand, sit fast, sit fast, man; foole, hold up your ladle there." Sig. B 2.

* Of all the figures in Tollett's window, this is the only one that has buttons upon it.

† See *Douce's Illustrations of Shakspeare*, vol. ii. p. 473.

‡ *Beaumont and Fletcher's Women Pleased*, act iv. scene 1.

And Green in his QUIP FOR AN UPSTART COURTIER says, "they wore beesoms of thrift in their hats like forehorses, or the lusty gallant in a Morrice-daunce."*

We have already hinted at the remoter origin of the May-pole, as explained by Maurice in his Indian antiquities. It must not however be concealed that the ingenious though somewhat fanciful Cleland has given to it a very different source and meaning. In his opinion the May-pole was nothing more than the standard of justice erected in the centre of the area, or market-place, which in those days was only a quick-set inclosure of trees felled and disposed of in the best way for defence. "In the vacation times there was nothing added to this May-pole. But when the days consecrated to justice came on, the declaration was made by hanging a garland on it. The word *Term*, expressive of the solemn *circling* of the May-pole, has at least as good a claim to be the real derivative as the Latin *terminus*, which is so much fitter to signify the shutting up courts instead of opening them; rather in a negative sense, the end of a vacation, than the affirmative beginning of a public act."† It certainly seems to strengthen this theory that dances made an essential part of all religious ceremonies in the Druid times, but still I must believe with Maurice that the May-games were originally a phallic festival.

The May-pole was made sometimes of oak,‡ at others

* Sig. B. 2.

† *The Way to Things by Words*, (published without the author's name.) 8vo. London, 1766.

‡ "The tall young *oak* is cut down for a Maypole, and the frolic fry of the town prevent (i.e. anticipate) the rising sun; and with joy in their faces, and boughs in their hands, they march before it to the place of erection."—*The Twelve Moneths*, by M. Stevenson,—May—p. 22, 4to. 1661.

of elm,* and at others again of birch,† painted yellow and black in spiral lines,‡ and ornamented at the top with a flag.§ In some parts of the country it was suffered to stand untouched the whole year round.‖

At Oxford, and the custom does not seem to have been confined to that place, Aubrey tells us, "the boys doe blow cowshorns and hollow canes all night; and on May-day the young maids of every parish carry about their parish garlands of flowers, which afterwards they hang up in their churches."¶ Hearne derives this blowing of horns** from a custom they had amongst the Greeks and Romans, as well as amongst the Jews, of using the horn for a drinking cup, and in proof thereof gives sundry quotations from Homer, Nonnus, and the scholiasts on Nicander. All this learning is wasted to very little purpose; the mere fact of its being a cheap instrument of noise, to be procured with very little trouble, would sufficiently account for the use of it without going to the Greeks and Romans.

Some classes, such as the milkmaids and the chimney-

* "From towns they made excursions on May-eve into the country, cut down a tall *elm*, bring it into town with rejoicings, and having fitted a straight taper pole to the end of it, and painted it, erect it in the most public part, and upon holidays and festivals dress it with garlands of flowers, or ensigns and streamers."—*Borlase's Natural History of Cornwall*, p. 294. Folio. Oxford, 1758.

† In his *Welsh Dictionary*, Owen explains *Bedwen* by "a birch tree; also a May-pole, because it was always made of birch."

‡ See Tollett's account of his window, fig. 8, in Jonson and Seeven's Shakspeare, at the end of Henry IV. part 1.

§ Lodge, in his *Wit's Miserie*, (p. 27, 4to. London, 1596,) when describing *Usury* says, "like the flag in the top of a Maypole."

Bourne's Antiquitates Vulgares, p. 201, 8vo. Newcastle, 1725.

¶ *Aubrey's Gentilisme and Judaisme*, folio 108, MS. Brit. Mus.

** See Preface to *Hearne's Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle*, vol. i. p. 18. 8vo. London, 1724.

sweepers, have in particular assumed this day for a distinctive festival; or, what is more likely, they continued to celebrate it long after it fell into disuse with their neighbours. The first of these have in most parts discontinued their peculiar mayings, though Strutt, who wrote little more than seventy years ago, says,* "the mayings are in some sorte yet kept up by the milk-maids at London, who go about the streets with their garlands and music dancing." Misson too, but he is of yet earlier date, has described the same thing, and more minutely—"On the first of May," he observes, "and the five and six days following, all the pretty young country girls that serve the town with milk, dress themselves up very neatly, and borrow abundance of silver plate, whereof they make a pyramid, which they adorn with ribbands and flowers, and carry upon their heads instead of common milk-pails. In this equipage, accompany'd by some of their fellow milk-maids and a bagpipe or fiddle, they go from door to door, dancing before the houses of their customers, in the midst of boys and girls, that follow them in troops, and everybody gives them something."†

The plate here alluded to, was in many,—I believe, in most—instances borrowed from some pawnbroker at so much per hour, and always under bond from responsible housekeepers for its safe return. In this way the same plate and garland would be let out to different parties in the course of the day, one set hiring them from ten till one, and another from one o'clock to six. Those who could not afford this display, had recourse to a custom much more simple and beautiful. A cow, selected no doubt for the superiority of her personal attractions, was tricked out for the occasion as fine as flowers and ribbons of all

* *Strutt's View of the Manners*, &c., vol. ii. p. 99.

† *Misson's Travels*, translated by Ozell, p. 307, 8vo. London, 1719.

colours could make her; they were twined about her horns, her neck, her tail, and even garlanded the rope by which she was led, while a net, with similar ornaments interwoven, was flung across her back, as though she had been a lady's palfrey. In this state Bessy was paraded along in triumph by a pretty country girl, quite as gay as herself with flowers and ribbons, the mistress marching at her side in like fashion. Nor is it many years since this primitive and pleasing show might have been witnessed within the sound of the old abbey-bells.

Many superstitions belong to May-day in practice that do not appear to have any necessary, or natural connection with it. Thus the month itself is held to be unlucky for the solemnization of marriage, an idea probably derived to us through Popish times from the ancient Romans.* To bathe the face in dew that lies upon the morning grass will on this particular day be as beneficial as the bath of beauty in the fairy tales.† Divinations also of various kinds are practised. In Northumberland they fish with a ladle for a wedding-ring, that has been dropt into a bowl of syllabub, the object being to prognosticate who shall first be married.‡ It would seem too that a species of divination was practised with snails. This was done by strewing the hearth with white embers, placing a snail upon them, and from the lines traced by the creature in

* So Ovid, a master in such matters, affirms:

"Nec viduæ tædis eadem, nec virginis apta
Tempora; quæ nupsit, non diuturna fuit.
Hac quoque de causa, si te proverbia tangunt,
Mense malas Maio nubere vulgus ait."

Fastorum, lib. v. ver. 486—490.

† *Brand's Popular Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 126. 12mo. edit. London, 1841.

‡ *Hutchinson's Northumberland*, vol. ii. p. 14, of *Ancient Customs*—at the end of the volume.

its progress imagining some letter which was to correspond with the initials of the "secret love."*

Haythorn, or white thorn, gathered now is an infallible safe-guard against witches, as we are told by that indefatigable *discoverer* of witchcraft, Reginald Scot.† "And now to be delivered from witches themselves, they hang in their entries an hearbe called *pentaphyllon*, cinque-fole, also an olive branch, also frankincense, myrrh, valerian, verven, palm, antirchmon,‡ &c., also hay-thorne, otherwise called white-thorne,§ gathered on Maie-daie." Finally, in regard to this branch of our subject, a superstition remains to be noticed, peculiar, as I believe, to the Isle of Lewis, one of the Western Islands of Scotland. "The natives in the village of Barvas retain an ancient custom of sending a man very early to cross Barvas river, every first day of May, to prevent any females crossing it first; for that, they say, would hinder the salmon from coming into the river all the year round. They pretend to have learned this from a foreign sailor, who was shipwrecked

* *Gay's Shepherd's Week*, 4th Pastoral.

† *Discoverie of Witchcraft.* By Reginald Scot, cap. xviii. p. 268. 4to. London, 1584.

‡ Although the word is so printed in both editions, I have no doubt whatever of its being a typographical blunder, for *antirrhinon*, sometimes called *anarrhinon*, or lychnis agria, Anglicè the herb *calves' snout*, or snap-dragon; in French mufle de veau; and in Greek cynocephalion. Pliny describes it as having no root—he could have been no very correct observer—of a hyacinthine flower, and the seed like a calf's snout. Magicians, he adds, have a high opinion of this herb, deeming that whoever wears it about the arm is safe from all poison, and evil charms, while to be anointed with it renders the person beautiful. In the first of the two qualities attributed to it, we see the cause of the superstition recorded by Scot.

§ This by a typographical blunder is printed *white-horne* in the quarto of 1584, but it is corrected in the folio.

on that coast a long time ago. This observation they maintain o be true from experience."*

Had the fanatics endeavoured to cure the people of these and the like superstitious follies they might have done some good, and would certainly have deserved some credit. But in this respect they were to the full as blind as their neighbours, and all the overflowing of their gall, which was not a little, was directed solely to put down an amusement, which they considered, and with reason, as opposed to their own religious traffic; it is not till the mind becomes completely soured and weaned from every thing like pleasure that it is fitted to receive their gloomy tenets. Hence, the jealous hatred borne by the fanatics of all ages towards the popular sports and pastimes, from the time of Lactantius† to those of Stubbes, or of Thomas Hall, the pastor, as he calls himself, of King's Norton—it should have been Hog's Norton, for a verier swine never wallowed in the mire of bigotry. In his *Funebria Florœ*, or the Downfall of May-games,‡ he brings twenty argu-

* *Martin's Description of Western Islands of Scotland*, p. 7 8vo. London, 1716.

† Lactantius, who flourished at the end of the third, and the beginning of the fourth century, and therefore might have known better, adopted the idle legend of Flora having been a prostitute, and dogmatizes upon this subject with his usual bitterness, "Celebrantur," he says, "illi ludi cum omni lasciviâ, convenienter memoriæ meretricis, nam præter verborum licentiam, quibus obscœnitas omnis effunditur, exuuntur etiam vestibus, populo flagitante, meretrices, quæ tunc mimarum funguntur officio, et in conspectu populi usque ad satietatem impudicorum luminum cum pudendis motibus detinentur." *Lactantii Institutionum*, lib. i.—*De Falsa Religione.*

As a father of the Church, Lactantius must have been both pious and modest; it follows as a matter of course; but without making any particular pretensions to either of these qualities, I should be ashamed to translate his modesty into English.

‡ Quarto. London, 1660.

ments in the form of theses against poor Flora, with a brief dissertation upon each, and ends by trying her before a packed jury of his own Puritans, who as a matter of course bring her in guilty, when the parson, as judge, thus pronounces sentence: "Flora, thou hast been indited by the name of Flora for bringing in abundance of misrule and disorder into church and state; thou hast been found guilty, and art condemned both by God and man, by scriptures, fathers, councils, by learned and pious divines, both old and new, and therefore I adjudge thee to perpetual banishment."*

There was perhaps no great harm in these impotent railings, and they at least show that the attempts of the parliament about eighteen years before to put down May-games had not been able to root out this festival from the affections of the people.† In the words of Macbeth,

* *Funebria Floræ*, p. 30.

† "And because," says this precious enactment, "the prophanation of the Lord's day hath been heretofore greatly occasioned by May-poles, (a heathenish vanity generally abused to superstition and wickedness) the Lords and Commons do further order and ordain that all and singular May-poles, that are or shall be erected, shall be taken down and removed by the constables, borsholders, tythingmen, petty constables and churchwardens of the parishes,"—mercy on us! what an army to put down a poor May-pole!—"where the same be; and that no May-pole shall be hereafter set up, erected, or suffered to be within this kingdom of England or dominion of Wales.

"And it is further ordained that if any of the said officers shall neglect to do their office in the premises within one week after notice of this ordinance, every of them for such neglect shall forfeit five shillings of lawful moneys; and so from week to week, weekly five shillings, more afterwards 'till the said May-pole shall be removed."

The act then goes on to denounce the King's declaration:—

"And it is further ordained by the said Lords and Commons that the King's declaration concerning observing of wakes, and use of exercise and recreation upon the Lord's Day; the book intituled *The King's Majesties Declaration to his subjects concerning lawfull*

they had "scotched the snake, not killed it," and with the restoration of the Stuarts the May-pole was also restored. And yet the Parliament in the time of the great Civil War had been strenuous in their endeavours to put down amusements of every kind, and to make Sunday a day of mourning. They had forbidden travelling on the Sabbath under heavy fines, or the crying or selling of fruits and herbs, or even the dressing of meat at inns except in a moderate way, and had even set their veto upon the ringing of bells, so far as it could be considered an amusement. To crown all, parents and masters were made responsible for the strict conformity with this act

sports to be used; and all other books and pamphlets that have been or shall be written, printed, or published, against the morality of the fourth commandment, or of the Lord's Day, or to countenance the prophanation thereof, be called in, seized, suppressed, and publiquely burnt by the justices of peace, &c. April 6, anno 1644."—*A Collection of Acts and Ordinances by Henry Scobell*, folio Lond. 1658, cap. xxxvii. p. 68.

This however is but a renewal of hostilities against the popular sports; in the year previous they had ordered that King Charles' "Booke of Sports" should be burnt by the common hangman as appears by the following broadside:—

"Die Veneris 5° Maii 1643.

"It is this day ordered by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the Booke concerning the enjoyning and tollerating of Sports upon the Lord's Day be forthwith burned by the hand of the common hangman in *Cheape-side* and other usuall places. And to this purpose the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex respectively are hereby required to be assistants to the effectuall execution of this order, and see the said books burnt accordingly; and all persons who have any of the said oks in their houses are hereby required forthwith to deliver them to one of the Sheriffes of London to be burnt according to this order.

JOHN BROWNE, Cler. Parl.
HENRY ELSYNGE, Cler. P. D. Com.

The Sheriffes of London and Middlesex have assigned Wednesday next the 10th of this instant May, at twelve of the clock, for the

of those under their control, provided they were not more than fourteen years old.*

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putting in execution of the foresaid Ordinance, and therefore doe require all persons that have any of the Bookes therein mentioned to bring them in by that time, that they may be burned accordingly.

JOHN LANGHAM.
THOMAS ANDREWS.

LONDON:

Printed for Thomas Underhill in Great Wood-street, May 9th, 1643."

This rare broadside is to be found in the British Museum with the press-mark 669. f.7

12

I hardly know whether it is necessary to add *that a borsholder* mentioned in the first of these enactments is a *tything-man*—"Tenne tythings," says Spenser, "make an *hundred*; and five make a *lathe or wapentake*; of which tenne each one was bound for another; and the eldest or best of them, whom they called the tythingman or *borsolder*, that is the eldest *pledge*, became surety for all the rest."

* "No person, or persons whatsoever shall publickly cry, shew forth, or expose to sale, any wares, merchandizes, *fruit*, *herbs*, goods or chattels whatsoever upon the Lord's Day. No person, or persons whatsoever shall, without reasonable cause for the same, *travel*, carry burthens, or do any worldly labours, or work whatsoever upon that day, or any part thereof.

"No person, or persons, shall hereafter upon the Lord's day use, exercise, keep, maintain, or be present at any Wrestlings, Shooting, Bowling, Ringing of Bells for Pleasure or Pastime, Masque, Wake, otherwise called Feasts, Church-ale, Dancing, Games, Sport or Pastime whatsoever.

"Nothing in this ordinance shall extend to the prohibiting of the dressing of meat in private families, or the dressing and sale of victuals in a moderate way in innes or victualling houses for the use of such as can not otherwise be provided for." April 6, 1644.—*Scobell's Collection*, cap. xxxvii. p. 69.

These saints moreover were pleased to allow milk to be cried before nine and after four from the 10th of September to the 10th of March; and before eight and after five from the 10th of March to the 10th of September.

In addition to the sports and pastimes already described, there prevails in the North of England a custom of making fools on the 1st of May similar to that more generally practised on the 1st of April. So at least says a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine,** who tells us, that "*U. P. K. spells May-goslings* is an expression used by boys at play, as an insult to the losing party. U. P. K. is *up-pick*, up with your pin or peg, the mark of the goal. An additional punishment was thus; the winner made a hole in the ground with his heel, into which a peg about three inches long was driven, its top being below the surface; the loser with his hands tied behind him was to pull it up with his teeth, the boys buffetting him with their hats, and calling out, *Up-peck, you May-gosling;* or, *U. P. K. gosling in May.* A May gosling on the 1st of May is made with as much eagerness in the North of England, as an April noddy (noodle) or fool, on the 1st of April."

About eighty years ago the great May-fair was held near Piccadilly on a spot which still retains the name of May-fair. Carter, the antiquarian, writing of it in 1816, says it then still existed in much the same state it had done fifty years before, and as his account is full of curious interest I shall give it at some length.—"May-fair exists in much the same state as at the above period; for instance, Shepherd's Market,* and houses surround-

* For April, 1791, vol. lxi. p. 327.

† SHEPHERD'S MARKET was thus called not from sheep being bought and sold there, but from the name of the builder, SHEPHEARD, who in 1738 obtained a grant from the government for establishing on that spot a market for live cattle, *(see Gentleman's Magazine* for March, 1738, vol. viii. p. 164. It must, however, have fallen into neglect in the course of time, for in the same work for January 1750, p. 40, we are told "the market was opened at May-fair for all sorts of cattle as at Smithfield."

ing it on the north and east sides, with White-horse-street, Shepherd's-court, Sun-court, Market-court: westwards, an open space extending to Tyburn (now Park-lane) now built upon in Chapel-street, Shepherd's-street, Market-street, Hertford-street, &c.; southwards, the noted Ducking-pond, house and gardens, since built upon, in a large Riding-school, Carrington-street, &c. The Market-house consisted of two stories; first story, a long and cross aisle for butcher's shops, externally, other shops connected with culinary purposes; second story used as a theatre at fair time for dramatic performances. Below the butchers gave place to toymen and gingerbread bakers. At present, the upper story is unflored the lower ditto nearly deserted by the butchers, and their shops occupied by needy pedling dealers in small wares; in truth, a most deplorable contrast to what was once such a point of allurement. In the areas encompassing the market-building were booths for jugglers, prize-fighters, both at cudgels and back-sword, boxing-matches, and wild beasts. The sports not under cover were mountebanks, fire-eaters, ass-racing, sausage-tables, dice ditto, up-and-downs, merry-go-rounds, bull-baiting, grinning for a hat, running for a shift, hasty-pudding eaters, eel-divers, and an infinite variety of other similar pastimes. Among the extraordinary and wonderful delights of the happy spot, take the following few items, which still hold place within my mind, though I can not affirm they all occurred at one precise season. The account may be relied on as I was born and passed my youthful days in the vicinity, in Piccadilly (Carter's statuary) two doors from the south end of White-horse-street, since rebuilt and occupied at present by Lady Pulteney.

"*Ducking-pond*, with a large commodious house, good disposure of walks, arbours, alcoves; and in an area be-

fore the house an extensive bason of water, otherwise Ducking-pond, for the recreation of lovers of that polite and humane sport. Persons who came with their dogs paid a trifling fee for admission, being considered the chief patrons and supporters of the pond; others, who visited the place as mere spectators, paid a double fee. A duck was put into the pond by the master of the hunt, the several dogs were then let loose to seize the bird. For a long time they made the attempt in vain; for, when they came near the devoted victim, she dived under water, and eluded their remorseless fangs. Here consisted the extreme felicity of the interesting scene. At length some dog more expert than the rest, caught the feathered prize and bore it away amidst the loudest acclamations to his most fortunate and envied master. This diversion was held in such high repute about the reign of Charles II. that he and many of his prime nobility did not disdain to be present, and partake with their dogs of the elegant entertainment. In Mrs. Behn's play of 'Sir Patient Fancy,' (written at the above period) a Sir Credulous Easy talks about a cobler, his dog-tutor, and his expectation of soon becoming the 'Duke of Ducking Pond.'

"*Mountebanks' Stage.*—One was erected opposite the Three Jolly Butchers' public-house, on the east side of the market area, now the King's Arms. Here Woodward, the inimitable comedian and harlequin, made his first appearance as Merry Andrew; from these humble boards he soon afterwards found his way to Covent Garden Theatre.

"*Beheading of Puppets.*—In a coal-shed attached to a grocer's shop one of these mock executions was exposed to the attending crowd. A shutter was fixed horizontally, on the edge of which, after many previous ceremonies, a puppet laid its head, and another puppet then instantly

chopped it off with an axe. In a circular stair-case window at the north end of Sun-court, a similar performance took place by another set of puppets. The condemned puppet bowed its head to the sill, which as above was soon decapitated. In these representations the late punishment of the Scotch chieftain, Lord Lovat, was alluded to, in order to gratify the feelings of southern loyalty at the expense of that farther north.

"*Strong Women.*—In a fore one-pair room, on the west side of Sun-court, a Frenchman submitted to the curious the astonishing strength of his wife. A blacksmith's anvil being procured from White-horse-street, with three of the men, they brought it up and placed it on the floor. The woman was short, but most beautifully and delicately formed, and of a most lovely countenance. She first let down her hair, a light auburn, of a length descending to her knees, which she twisted round the projecting part of the anvil, and then with seeming ease lifted the ponderous weight some inches from the floor. After this a bed was laid in the middle of the room, when reclining on her back, and uncovering her bosom, the husband ordered the smiths to place thereon the anvil, and forge upon it a horse-shoe. This they obeyed, by taking from the fire a red-hot piece of iron, and with their forging hammers completing the shoe with the same might and indifference as when in the shop at their constant labour. The prostrate fair one appeared to endure this with the utmost composure, talking and singing during the whole process; then with an effort, which to the bye-standers seemed like some supernatural trial, cast the anvil from off her body, jumping up at the same moment with extreme gaiety, without the least discomposure of her dress or person.

"That no trick or collusion could possibly be practised

on the occasion was obvious from the following evidence. The audience stood promiscuously about the room, among whom were one family and friends, the smiths utter strangers to the Frenchman, but known to us, therefore the several efforts of strength must have proceeded from the natural and surprising power this foreign dame was possessed of. She next put her naked foot on a red-hot salamander, without receiving the least injury; but this is a feat familiar to us at this time.

"*Tiddy-Doll.*—The celebrated vendor of gingerbread, who, from his eccentricity of character and extensive dealings in his way, was always hailed as the king of itinerant tradesmen. In his person he was tall, well-made, and his features handsome. He affected to dress like a person of rank, wearing a white gold-laced suit of cloaths, laced ruffled shirt, laced hat and feather, white silk stockings, with the addition of a fine white apron. Among his harangues to gain customers, take this specimen: 'Mary, Mary, where are you now, Mary? I live when at home in the second house in Little Ball-street, two steps under ground, with a wiscum, riscum, and a why not. Walk in, ladies and gentlemen; my shop is on the second floor backwards, with a brass knocker at the door. Here is your nice gingerbread, your spice gingerbread; it will melt in your mouth like a red-hot brick-bat, and tumble in your inside like Punch and his wheel-barrow.' This address he ever finished by singing the following fragment of some popular ballad;

Ti-tid-dy ti-ti, ti-tid-dy, ti-ti,
Ti-tid-dy, ti-ti, tid-dy did-dy, dol-lol,
Ti-tid-dy, ti-tid-dy, ti-ti
Tid-dy tid-dy dol.

"Henoe the nickname of Tiddy-Dol. In Hogarth's print of the execution of the *Idle Prentice* at Tyburn, Tiddy-Dol

is seen holding up a gingerbread cake with his left hand, his right being within his coat, and addressing the mob in his usual way, 'Mary, Mary, &c.' His costume agrees with the aforesaid description. For many years (and perhaps at present) allusions were made to his name; as thus—'you are so fine (to a person dressed out of character) you look like Tiddy-doll—you are as tawdry as Tiddy-doll—you are quite Tiddy-doll,' &c.

"Soon after this, Lord Coventry occupied the house, corner of Engine-street,* Piccadilly, (built by Sir Henry Hunlocke, Bart., on the site of a large ancient inn, called the *Greyhound*); he being annoyed with the unceasing uproar night and day during the fair—the whole month of May—procured, I know not by what means, the entire abolition of this festival of *Misrule* and disorder."†

The last paragraph in Carter's reminiscence forms a pretty comment on the maxim "that every man may do what he pleases with his own," and proves that it is confined to the possessors of lands and fine houses. The people were to be debarred from their amusements—amusements that had dated from antiquity—because it suited Lord Coventry to take up his abode in their neighbourhood.

Various other parts of London seems to have been particularly connected with the May-games. Thus Stow, when writing of *Ealdgate Ward*, now called Aldgate Ward,

* Engine-street still retains its name. It is situated in Piccadilly between White-horse-street and Down-street, and leads into Brick-street, which latter was, as I have been told, a notorious abode some fifty years ago, of thieves and prostitutes; whence any bad character in the neighbourhood was usually styled a *Brickaderian*. A celebrated prize-fighter who, from the small-pox marks in his face, had obtained the soubriquet of CRUMPET, was among the notorieties of this street.

† *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. lxxxvi. p. 228. March, 1816.

Leadenhall Street, tells us, "at the north-west corner of this ward, in the said high street, standeth the fair and beautiful parish church of St. Andrew the Apostle, with an addition, to be known from other churches of that name, of the *knape* or *undershaft*, and so called St. Andrew Undershaft, because that of old time every year—on May-day in the morning—it was used that an high or long shaft, or Maypole, was set up there in the midst of the street before the south door of the said church. Which shaft, when it was set on end, and fixed in the ground, was higher than the church-steeple. This shaft was not raised since *Evil May-day*—so called of an insurrection made by prentices and other young persons against aliens in the year 1517—but the said shaft was laid along over the doors, and under the pentises of one row of houses, and Alley Gate, called after the *shaft*, SHAFT ALLEY. It was there I say hanged, on iron hooks, many years till the third of King Edward VI., that one Sir Stephen, curate of St. Katharine, Christ Church, preaching at Paul's Cross, said there that this shaft was made an idol, by naming the church of St. Andrew with the addition of *under that shaft;* he persuaded, therefore, that the names of churches might be altered; also that the names of days in the week might be changed, the fish-days to be kept any days except Fridays and Saturdays; and the Lent, any time save only betwixt Shrovetide and Easter. I have oft times seen this man, forsaking the pulpit of his said parish church, preach out of a high elm-tree in the midst of the churchyard; and then entering the church, forsaking the altar, to have sung his high mass in English upon a tomb of the dead towards the north. I heard his sermon at Paul's Cross, and I saw the effect that followed; for in the afternoon of that present Sunday, the neighbours and tenants of the

said bridge,* over whose doors the said shaft had lain, after they had dined, to make themselves strong, gathered more help, and with great labour raising the shaft from the hooks, (wherein it had rested two and thirty years), they sawed it in pieces, every man taking for his share so much as had lain over his door and stall, the length of his house; and they of the Alley divided amongst them so much as had laid over their alley gate. Thus was this idol—as he, poor man, termed it—mangled, and after burned."†

Little Drury also was, at one time, celebrated for its May-pole. It stood at the north end, and was erected by John Clarges, a smith and farrier in the Savoy, to commemorate his daughter's good fortune in having married General Monk, at a time when he was only a private gentleman, and thus after the restoration becoming Duchess of Albemarle.‡ These curious particulars respecting the family would, in all probability, have been forgotten, with many better things, but for a dispute among themselves, which brought every thing out in a court of justice, and left it upon the record. A correspondent in the Gentleman's Magazine, gives the following account of it. "I have in my possession minutes of a trial upon an action of trespass between William Sherwin, plaintiff, and Sir Walter Clarges, Bart., and others, defendants, at the King's Bench Bar, at Westminster, 15th November, 1700. The plaintiff, as heir and representative of Thomas Monk, Esq., elder brother of George, Duke of Albemarle, claimed the manor of Sutton, in co. York, and other lands in Newton, Eaton Bridge, and Shipton, as heir-at-

* That is of *Rochester Bridge*, of which, he had before said, it was a possession.

† *Stow's London*, by Strype, vol. i. book ii. p. 65.

‡ *Gentleman's Magazine* for January 1792, vol. lxii. p. 18.

law to the said duke, against the defendant, devisee under the will of Duke Christopher, his only child, who died in 1689; S.P." (i.e. sine prole, without offspring.) "Upon this trial some very curious particulars came out, respecting the family of Anne, wife of George, created Duke of Albemarle. It appeared that she was daughter of John Clarges, a farrier in the Savoy, and farrier to Colonel Monk. In 1632, she was married in the church of St. Laurence Pountney, to Thomas Ratford, son of Thomas Ratford, late a farrier, servant to Prince Charles, and resident in the Mews. She had a daughter, who was born in 1634, and died in 1638. Her husband and she lived at the *Three Spanish Gipsies*, in the New Exchange, and sold wash-balls, powder, gloves, and such things, and she taught girls plain work. About 1647, she being a sempstress to Colonel Monk, used to carry him linen. In 1648 her father and mother died. In 1649 she and her husband fell out and parted. But no certificate from any parish register appears reciting his burial. In 1652 she was married in the church of St. George, Southwark, to General George Monk, and in the following year was delivered of a son, Christopher, (afterwards the second and last Duke of Albemarle above mentioned), who was suckled by Honours Mills, who sold apples, herbs, oisters, &c. One of the plaintiff's witnesses swore that 'a little before the sickness,' (i.e., the plague), 'Thomas Ratford demanded and received of him the sum of twenty shillings, that his wife saw Ratford again after the sickness, and a second time after the duke and duchess were dead.' A woman swore that she saw him 'the day his wife, then called Duchess of Albemarle, was put into her coffin, which was after the death of the duke,' her second husband; who died 3rd January, 1669-70. And a third witness swore that he saw Ratford about July, 1660. In

opposition to this evidence it was alleged that 'all along during the lives of Duke George and Duke Christopher this matter was never questioned—' that the latter was universally received as only son of the former—and that 'this matter had been thrice before tried at the bar of the King's Bench, and the defendant had had three verdicts.' A witness swore that he owed Ratford five or six pounds, which he had never demanded. And a man, who had 'married a cousin of the Duke of Albemarle, had been told by his wife that Ratford died five or six years before the duke married.' Lord Chief Justice Holt told the jury, 'if you are certain that Duke Christopher was born while Thomas Ratford was living, you must find for the plaintiff. If you believe he was born after Ratford was dead, or that nothing appears what became of him after Duke George married his wife, you must find for the defendant.' A verdict was given for the defendant, who was only son to Sir Thomas Clarges, Knt., brother to the illustrious duchess in question, was created a baronet, October 30th, 1674, and was ancestor to the baronets of his name."*

Another celebrated May-pole was erected in the Strand, near Catharine Street, which was first raised in 1661, to celebrate the restoration of Charles II. The writer of an old pamphlet, published at the time, thus describes it: "Let me declare to you the manner in generall of that stately cedar erected in the Strand, 134 feet high, commonly called the May-pole, upon the cost of the parishners there adjacent, and the gracious consent of his Sacred Majesty, with the illustrious prince, the Duke of York.

"This tree was a most choice and remarkable piece; 'twas made below bridge, and brought in two parts up to Scotland Yard, near the king's palace, and from thence

* *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1793, vol. lxiii. p. 886.

it was conveyed, April the 14th, to the Strand, to be erected.

"It was brought with a streamer flourishing before it, drums beating all the way, and other sorts of music; it was supposed to be so long that landmen (as carpenters) could not possibly raise it; Prince James, the Duke of York, Lord High Admirall of England, commanded twelve seamen off aboord to come and officiate the business, whereupon they came and brought their cables, pullies, and other tacklins, with six great anchors; after this was brought three crowns, bore by three men bare-headed, and a streamer displaying all the way before them, drums beating, and other musick playing; numerous multitudes of people thronging the streets, with great shouts and acclamations all day long.

"The Maypole then being joyned together, and hoopt about with bands of iron, the crown and vane with the king's armes richly gilded was placed on the end of it. This being done, the trumpets did sound, and in four hours' space it was advanced upright, after which being established fast in the ground, six drums did beat, and the trumpets did sound again, great shouts and acclamations the people gave, that it did ring throughout all the whole Strand; after that came a Morice dance, finely deckt with purple scarfs in their half shirts, with a taber and pipe, the ancient musick, and danced round about the Maypole; after that, danced the rounds of their liberty. Upon the top of this famous standard is likewise set up a royal purple streamer; about the middle of it is placed four crowns more, with the king's arms likewise; there is also a garland set upon it, of various colours, of delicate rich favours, under which is to be placed three great lanthorns, to remain for three honours; that is, one for Prince James, Duke of York, Lord High Admirall of

England; the other for the vice-admirall; and the third for the rear-admiral; these are to give light in dark nights, and to continue so long as the pole stands, which will be a perpetual honour to seamen. It is placed, as near hand as they could guess, in the very same pit where the former stood, but far more glorious, bigger and higher than ever any one that stood before it; and the seamen themselves do confess that it could not be built higher, nor there is not such a one in Europe beside, which highly doth please his Majesty, and the illustrious Prince, Duke of York. Little children did much rejoice, and antient people did clap their hands, saying, golden dayes began to appear. I question not but 'twill ring like melodious musicke throughout every county in England when they read this story, being exactly pen'd."*

How or when the chimney-sweepers contrived to intrude their sooty persons into the company of the gay and graceful Flora upon her high festival is more than I am able to tell; but that they form the most conspicuous portion of a May-day festival must be familiar to every one. Perhaps I should rather speak of this in the past tense, for though the custom still maintains a lingering existence, it will probably be numbered in a few years amongst the things that have been. A time therefore may come when a slight record of it will be read with curiosity.

The festival lasts three days, when the chimney-sweepers' apprentices assemble in parties, the number of each varying from six to twenty or more according to circumstances, and generally accompanied by a drum. All however have certain common characteristics. First, there is

* *The Cities Loyalty Diplayed*, 4to. London, 1661, p. 4. It is a thin pamphlet, of five pages only, and though exceedingly scarce, is to be found in the British Museum, under the head *London*.

the JACK IN THE GREEN, a large hollow cone of hoops or basket-work, about six feet high, and sometimes more, so completely covered with ivy, holly, flowers, and ribbons, that the person carrying it is altogether hidden except his feet; I have little doubt that this is nothing else than the old triangular garland, which we so often find suspended upon the May-pole, only fallen, Darius-like, "from its high estate," and now become loco-motive upon the ground. Next comes the Lord of the May, always the tallest of the apprentices, his face half washed, and whole painted, or daubed rather with Dutch pink; he has on a cocked hat, fringed with red or yellow feathers; his coat is of a mongrel breed or fashion, being like a livery, like a military coat, like a court-dress, and yet having a distinct character of its own; and in the breast of this he sticks a mighty nosegay; his waistcoat is glorious with much lace; his frill is of most unusual magnitude; his breeks—many thanks to the Scotch for so decorous a word—his breeks are satin with paste knee-buckles; his stockings are of silk with figured clocks; his feet, seldom of very small dimensions, are cased in dancing-pumps, wherein he wears immense buckles: to his well-powdered hair is appended a bag with a rosette; in his right hand he carries a cane or stick with refulgent metal-knob, his sceptre, "the attribute to awe and majesty;" and in his left he has a handkerchief—at one time white, though now of a dingy yellow—which he holds in a rather nimini pimini way by the corner. Next comes the Lady of the May, sometimes personated by a strapping damsel, but more frequently by a young sooterkin in female attire, as fine as he or she can possibly be made by the help of foil, ribbons, and flowers; if Flora was really the doubtful character that some have painted her, the appearance of her representative could not have been in

better keeping; in her right hand she bears a brass ladle; and in her left, the usual emblem of gentility, a dirty pocket-handkerchief. Sometimes too there is a clown in the regular costume of modern pantomime, but this, I fear, must be considered as a very illegitimate practice. All the rest are more or less gaily equipped; sometimes their heads are garlanded with flowers, and, when this is not the case, their hats are profusely ornamented with foil and coloured papers; so too their jackets, while their grimy legs, and no less grimy faces, are daubed very artistically with Dutch pink, mixed with stripes or patches of white chalk, and the same sort of decoration is extended even to their shovels.

In this guise they parade the streets, when suddenly they stop, *Jack in the Green* begins to dance, my lord and lady caper likewise, and the younger sooterkins follow the example, to the music of their little wooden shovels, on which they keep up a rapping with their brushes. The dance being ended, the two principals respectively bow and courtesy to each other with the greatest politeness, and a general attack is commenced upon the liberality of the spectators. My Lord, hat in hand, bows graciously to any window from which he can catch the glimpse of a curious face; my Lady presents her ladle to them; and the subordinate fry of sooterkins hold up their shovels in a manner not to be mistaken. Sometimes a very fair day's work is done in this manner; but the masters are rapacious enough to claim for themselves the lion's share of all that is thus obtained, the entire receipt of the two first holydays being in most cases their allotted portion.

Throughout the different counties there has prevailed a considerable variety in the celebration of the May-games, although always the same in spirit and intention. In Cornwall they are called the *Furry*, a word variously de-

rived from *Flora*—from the old Cornish term, *fer*, a fair or jubilee—and from the root of the Greek verb φερω, because on that day the people carry flowers. The second derivation which emanated from Polwhele,* is not alone the most plausible, but the only one of the three that carries with it a shadow of reason.

At Helston this festival takes place on the 8th, when the season is ushered in with drums, kettles, and other music, as accompaniments to the *Furry Song*, which however is so full of modern allusions as to be hardly worth repeating. The observance of the holy-day is so strictly insisted upon by the natives that if any one be found at work he is instantly seized, set astride on a pole, hurried off on men's shoulders to the river, and compelled to leap over it at a place especially chosen for its width, and thus affording the culprit a fair chance of a good ducking. He is, however, allowed to compound for the leap if he pleases. "About nine o'clock the revellers appear before the grammar-school, and demand a holiday for the schoolboys, after which they collect from house to house more money than is now-a-day collected on a brief from the Tweed to the Land's End. They then *fade* into the country—*fade* being an old English word for *go*,—and about the middle of the day return with flowers and oak-branches in their hats and caps, from which till the dusk they dance hand in hand through the streets to the sound of the fiddle, playing a particular tune; and thread the houses as they list, claiming a right to go through any person's house, in at one door, and out at the other. In the afternoon the ladies and gentlemen used to visit some farm-house in the neighbourhood, whence, having regaled themselves with syllabubs they returned, after the fashion of the vulgar, dancing as briskly the *fade-dance*, and en-

* *History of Cornwall*, vol. i. p. 41, 4to. Falmouth, 1803.

tering the houses as unceremoniously. At present a select party only make their progress through the street very late in the evening, when they quickly vanish from the view, reappearing in the ball-room."*

A correspondent of Hone's gives a somewhat different account of the Cornish festivities on this occasion.—"It is," he says, "an annual custom on May-eve for a number of young men and women to assemble at a public-house and sit up till the clock strikes twelve, when they go round the town with violins, drums, and other instruments, and by sound of music call upon others who had previously settled to join them. As soon as the party is formed, they proceed to different farm-houses, within four or five miles of the neighbourhood, where they are expected as regularly as May morning comes; and they there partake of a beverage called *junket*, made of raw milk and rennet, or *running*, as it is there called, sweetened with sugar and a little cream added. After this they take tea and heavy country cake, composed of flour, cream, sugar, and currants; next, rum and milk; and then a dance. After thus regaling, they gather the May. While some are breaking down the boughs, others sit and make the *May-music*. This is done by cutting a circle through the bark at certain distances from the bottom of the May branches; then by gently and regularly tapping the bark all round, from the cut circle to the end, the bark becomes loosened, and slips away whole from the wood, and a hole being cut in the pipe it is easily formed to emit a sound when blown through and becomes a whistle.† The gathering and the May-music being finished they then

* Polwhele's *History of Cornwall*, vol. i. p. 42.

† This bark-whistle, so laboriously described by Hone's correspondent, must, I should think, be familiar to every school-boy. It is usually made from willow.

bring home the May by five or six o'clock in the morning, with the band playing, and their whistles blowing. After dancing through the town they go to their respective employments. Although May-day should fall on a Sunday, they observe the same practice in all respects, with the omission of dancing in the town.*

On the first Sunday after May-day it is a custom with families at Penzance to visit Rose-hill, Poltier, and other adjacent villages by way of recreation. These pleasure-parties usually consist of two or three families together. They carry flour and other materials with them to make the *heavy-cake*, just described, at the pleasant farm-dairies

* In regard to the celebration of May day though it fell upon a Sunday, such also was the custom in the time of James the First, the king only stipulating that the games should not be during the hours of divine service, and—which does not seem quite so reasonable—that no one should participate in them who had not been to church. In all other respects his view of the matter affords so excellent a lesson and rebuke to the bigots of our own time that I can not forbear giving a brief extract from it. "This prohibition barreth the common and meaner sort from using such exercises as may make their bodies more able for warre, when wee or our successors shall have occasion to use them. And in place thereof sets up filthy tiplings and drunkennesse, and breeds a number of idle and discontented speeches in their ale-houses. For when shall the common people have leave to exercise if not upon the Sundayes and holydaies, seeing they must apply their labour and win their living in all working daies?"

The king then goes on to say "our pleasure is that after divine service our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, either men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmlesse recreation, nor from having of Maygames, Whitson-Ales, and Morris-dances, and the setting up of Maypoles.... And that women shall have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decoring of it, according to the old custome." The KING'S DECLARATION CONCERNING LAWFUL SPORTS. London, 1633.

which are always open for their reception. "Nor do they forget to take tea, sugar, rum, and other comfortable things for their refreshment, which by paying a trifle for baking, and for the niceties awaiting their consumption, contents the farmers for the house-room and pleasure they afford their welcome visitants. Here the young ones find delicious *junkets*, with *sour milk*, cut in diamonds, which is eaten with sugar and cream. New-made cake, refreshing tea and exhilirating punch satisfy the stomach, cheer the spirits, and assist the walk home in the evening. These pleasure-takings are never made before May-day; but the first Sunday that succeeds it, and the leisure of every other afternoon is open to the frugal enjoyment; and among neighbourly families and kind friends the enjoyment is frequent."*

Inventio Crucis; Holy-Rood Day; Holy-Cross Day,—May 3d.—This day takes its first name, *Inventio Crucis*, i. e. *Discovery of the Cross*, from its being the anniversary of the finding of the real cross by Saint Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. According to the legend, told by Ambrosius, Theodoretus, and other veracious historians of the church, the good lady in 326 took it into her head to make a pilgrimage to Palestine, she being then very near eighty years of age.† Her first visit is to Golgotha, when she is seized with a fancy —Ambrosius calls it a *divine inspiration*—for seeing the

* This lamely-written account, which might have come from the pen of a school-boy, occurs in Hone's *Every Day Book*, vol. i. p. 561; but indeed Hone and his contributors generally wrote in the most childish style that can be imagined. I have given it for the sake of the facts which are sufficiently interesting.

† Πρὸ γὰρ ὀλίγου τῆς τελευτῆς τὴν ἀποδημίαν ταύτην ἐποίησατο ὀγδοηκοντοῦτις δὲ τὸ τέρμα τοῦ βίου κατειληφεν. B. Theodoreti *Ecclesias. Hist.* lib. i. cap. xvii. p. 794. tom. iii. 8vo. Halæ, 1771.

true cross, and is exceedingly wrath with the devil for having hid it; for it seems he had put it into the head of his heathen friends to build a temple to Venus on the ground where Christ was buried, and to erect a statue to Jupiter on the place of his resurrection. All this was sufficiently provoking to an empress who was not used to be thwarted in any of her fancies; "here," says the pious pilgrim, "is the battle-ground, but where is the victory? I seek the standard of salvation, but find it not; shall I sit in royalty, and the cross of the Lord in dust? shall I dwell in gilded palaces, and the triumph of Christ is in ruins? I see what you have been doing, Satan, that the sword which smote you might be hidden."* But how was the sable gentleman to be defeated? Eusebius says that she was helped out of this difficulty by a vision, a resource common to poets and ecclesiastical historians; but other authorities more modestly state that she had recourse to a council of old women—male as well as female—of Jerusalem, who agreed that if she could discover the sepulchre she would be sure to find also the instruments of punishment, it being always the custom among the Jews to make a great hole near the place where the body of any criminal was buried, and to throw into it whatever belonged to the execution, for they held such objects too detestable to be kept in sight. Thus advised, she ordered the fane to be pulled down, and was rewarded for her pious zeal by finding three crosses, the

* "Accessit ad Golgotha, et ait; 'ecce locus pugnæ, ubi est victoria? quæro vexillum salutis, et non invenio. Ego,' inquit, 'in regnis, et crux Domini in pulvere? ego in aureis, et in ruinis Christi triumphus? .... Video quid egeris, diabole, ut gladius quo peremtus es, obstrueretur.'" *Sancti Ambrosii Opera*, tom. vii. p. 38, sect. 43 and 44.—*De Obitu Theodosii Oratio.* I am sorry to be forced to add that Erasmus declares this amusing oration is spurious.

nails employed in the crucifixion, and the *title*, or label, which had once been affixed to the real cross. But now came another difficulty; the title having been separated by decay or accident, how was she to distinguish the cross of Christ from those of the two thieves? This would have puzzled most people, but it did not puzzle the inspired bishop, Macarius, who on being consulted recommended that all three should be taken to a lady of rank then lying ill, and their powers severally tested in her cure. Two were tried without effect, but the third restored the patient to perfect health, and was consequently pronounced to be the genuine. Great, hereupon, was the delight of the poor old empress. Part of the nails she manufactured into a helmet for her son, as a sure guard against hostile weapons, part she did into his horse's bridle, both for his soul's health and in fulfilment of the oracle of Zechariah.* Another portion she destined for the palace, and the rest she enclosed in a silver case made especially for the purpose, and presented to the bishop as a memorial for posterity. In conclusion—without which all the rest would have gone for nothing with the pious—she built a splendid church upon the ruins of the heathen temple.†

Holy-Rood Day, the name sometimes given to the third of May, takes its rise from the same circumstance, *the rood*, as Fuller informs us, being an image of Christ on the cross, made generally of wood, and erected in a

* Zechariah, chap. xiv. v. 20.

† *Theodoreti Ecclesiastica Historia*, lib. i. cap. xvii. I presume it is from the same source that the Rev. Alban Butler has drawn the account given by him in his *Lives of the Fathers*, (vol. vi. p. 45,) but he has omitted all mention of the talismanic helmet—why, I can not imagine, that little incident being so exceedingly characteristic of the good empress.

loft for that purpose, just over the passage out of the church into the chancel."*

The next day of importance in this month is the 8th—the APPARITION OF ST. MICHAEL—held sacred by the Catholics on account of the three apparitions, or appearances, of St. Michael. The first was on Mount Garganus, now called Mount St. Angelo, a lofty hill and promontory of Apulia, which advances into the Adriatic Sea. A herdsman, having lost his ox, and after a long search finding it in the mouth of a cavern, flung a dart at the animal, when the weapon rebounded upon him and wounded him. Terrified at this miracle, he consulted his bishop, who ordered a three days' fast, and the latter, being afterwards visited by St. Michael in person, was informed by him that he had wounded the herdsman by way of letting them know that he was the patron-saint of the city.

A second apparition was when the Neapolitans, who were then Pagans, waged war against the Christian people of Sipentum, a city of Apulia. In this case also the then bishop ordained a three days' fast, the usual episcopal panacea for all evils, and commanded moreover that the people should pray to Saint Michael for assistance. They of course obeyed these injunctions, and in the night-time the bishop was rewarded for his advice by a familiar visit from St. Michael, with a promise that his flock should have the victory. Most faithfully, too, did the saint keep his word, for the next day, when the opposing armies met, Mount Garganus was shaken with repeated thunders, the air was darkened, and the heathens, terrified out of their wits by these prodigies, fled as fast as they could to Naples.

* *History of Waltham Abbey*, p. 16.—See his works, folio. Lond. 1655. Ad finem.

A third appearance was at Romé in the time of Gregory the Great. The pontiff was praying against a pestilence, when he saw an angel upon the mount of Adrian, with a bloody sword in his hand, which he then sheathed, whence the supplicant inferred that his prayers had been granted, and in consequence he built a chapel on the spot in honour of all the angels.* There would, however, seem to be some little difficulty in understanding why the day should be particularly dedicated to St. Michael, a difficulty which Durandus endeavours to get over by many ingenious arguments, his principal one being that St. Michael was the guardian of Paradise,† and therefore more especially entitled to such an honour.

ROGATION SUNDAY. The fifth Sunday after Easter. It took its name from preceding the *Rogation Days*, that is the three days before Holy Thursday, *Rogation* being a term generally used to denote processional supplications; the reason of the word being more specifically applied to the days in question was this:—About the year 550, the city of Vienne, (in Dauphinè,) was much troubled with earthquakes and the irruption of wild beasts, whereupon Mamertus, the bishop of the diocese, obtained permission from the senate to ordain processional supplications on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, before the Ascension.‡

* *Hospinian De Festis Christ.* fol. 85.

† *Durandi Rat. Divin. Offic.* lib. vii. cap. 12.

‡ "Dum civitas Viennensium crebro terræ motu subrueretur et bestiarium desolaretur incursu, sanctus Mamertus, ejus civitatis episcopus, eas dicitur pro malis quæ præmissimus ordinasse." *Wallifred. Stral.* c. 28. d. *De Rebus Ecclesiast.* I give the passage, as quoted by Bourne, having only taken the liberty of reading *dicitur* for *legitur*, a manifest misprint, which as a matter of course, Sir Henry Ellis, who quotes from him, has retained, with the addition—also of course—of another typographical blunder—*De* REP. *Ecclesiast.* See also *Shep-*

It is not easy to say when or how these *rogations* became mixed up with the parochial perambulations, but there cannot be the least doubt that the latter have been derived to us from the times of the Romans. It is only a Christian form of the *Terminalia*, established by Numa Pompilius, in honour of the God *Terminus*, the guardian of fields and landmarks, and maintainer of peace amongst mankind.*

Even the Reformation did not sweep away this useful custom; it only modified the observance; and we find Elizabeth ordering that "the curate, at certain and convenient places, shall admonish the people to give thanks in the beholding God's benefits, for the increase and abundance of his fruits upon the face of the earth, with the saying of the 103d psalm, at which time the minister shall inculcate these, or such sentences—'cursed be he which translateth the bounds and doles† of his neighbours.'"‡

The week, in which these days fell, was also called

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herd's "Elucidation of Common Prayer," vol. ii. p. 127, who, however, in the earlier edition of his work mistook this "civitas Vienensium," for Vienna, the capital of Austria. In the second edition of vol. ii. the error is corrected.

* Spelman, in his Glossary under the head *Perambulatio*, says, "refert Plutarchus in Problem xiii. Numam Pompilium cum finitimis agri terminis constituisse et in ipsis finibus Terminum, Deum, quasi finium præsidem amicitiæque ac pacis custodem posuisse. Hinc festa ei dicata quæ Terminalia nuncupantur, quorum vice nos quotannis ex vetustissimâ consuetudine parochiarum terminos lustramus,—Saxonibus *gangdagas*, hodiernis processiones et *Rogationes* appellatas.

† *Dole* means a boundary-stone. Todd derives it from the Saxon *dælan*, to divide; but I should rather fancy it was the Celtic *dol*, a stone, which we find in the compound word *dolman*, i.e. *the Stone of the Men*, another name for the cromlech.

‡ *Bourne's Antiq.* vol. i. p. 207.

Cross-week, "because in ancient times, when the priests went into the fields, the cross was carried before them."* In the north it was, and I believe still is, called *gang-week*, from the provincial word *gang*, a descendant from the Anglo-Saxon gang-days already noticed. Lastly, it was termed *Grass-week*, in some of the inns of court, because the commons then consisted mostly of sallads and green vegetables.

There is a superstitious observance appertaining to this week peculiar to Kent, but which I believe may be found, with modifications, in Devonshire also. Hasted, who sometimes condescended to relieve his antiquarian details by scraps of this kind, informs us "there is an odd custom used in these parts, about Keston and Wickham, in Rogation week; at which time a number of young men meet together for the purpose, and with a most hideous noise run into the orchards, and incircling each tree, pronounce these words:

Stand fast root, bear well top,
God send us a *youling*† sop!
Every twig, apple big;
Every bough, apple enow.

For which incantation the confused rabble expect a gratuity in money, or drink, which is no less welcome. But if they are disappointed of both, they with great solemnity anathematize the owners and trees with altogether as insignificant a curse. It seems highly probable that this custom has arisen from the ancient one of perambulation among the heathens, when they made their

* *Bourne's Antiq. Vulg.* p. 285, note.

† I hardly know whether it may be necessary to explain to any one that this *youling*, or *yuling* sop is an allusion to the roasted crab-apple, which is put into the wassail bowl at Christmas, the ale thus prepared forming the well-known drink called *lambs-wool*.

prayers to the Gods for the use and blessing of the fruits coming up, with thanksgivings for those of the preceding year. And as the heathens supplicated Æolus, God of the winds, for his favourable blasts; so in this custom, they still retain his name with a very small variation, this ceremony being called *youling*, and the word is often used in their invocations."*

I doubt much however the word *youling* having any thing to do with the God Æolus. It is derived, in my opinion, from the Indian *huly*, a spring festival; for though in more modern times YULE has been restricted to mean a Christmas feast, yet with the Druids it was also applied to those that were celebrated in the month of May. We shall find, too, that the word, under various modifications of the original root, runs through the Gothic, Danish, Welsh, and other languages, and always more or less distinctly signifying a *rejoicing* or *festival-making* This is clearly its meaning amongst the people of Kent in the ceremony just described.

Ascension Eve. This, though not noticed amongst Protestants, is held by the more rigid Catholics to be a particular occasion for alms-giving, for, as Durandus tells us,† the previous fasts are of no avail without works of charity; "if," says he, quoting St. Gregory, "you wish your prayer to rise to Heaven, you must lend it two wings—fasting and alms-giving."

* Hasted's *History of Kent*, vol. i. p. 109.

† "Quia vero jejunium quo præmissum est non sufficit sine operibus misericordiæ, ideo in vigiliâ Ascensionis, quæ est tertia dies rogationum, ecclesia monet ad opera misericordiæ.... Dicit enim Gregor. 'Si vis orationem tuam ad cælum volare, fac ei duas alas, scilicet jejunium et eleemosynam.'" *Gul. Durandi, Rat. Div. Offic.* lib. vi. cap. ciii. p. 260.

Ascension-Day, or Holy Thursday. This, as the name sufficiently implies, is the anniversary of Christ's Ascension, but there is no peculiar mention of this festival amongst the elder writers on such subjects. It is celebrated on the fortieth day after the passover, because Christ ascended into Heaven on the fortieth day after his resurrection.* A few trifling observances still cling to it in some parts, the relicks of our forefathers' superstitions. Thus we are told by a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine, when speaking of superstitions prevalent in the neighbourhood of Exeter, "that the figure of a lamb actually appears in the east on the morning of Ascension-Day is the popular persuasion. And so deeply is it rooted that it hath frequently resisted (even in intelligent minds) the force of the strongest argument." †

Reginald Scot also mentions two superstitions as connected with this day, but without localizing them—"in some countries," he says, "they run out of the doors in time of tempest, blessing themselves with a cheese, whereupon there was a cross made with a rope's end upon Ascension-Day—Item, to hang an egg, laid on Ascension-Day in the roof of the house preserveth the same from all hurts." ‡

In conclusion it should not be forgotten that the custom of parochial perambulations has amongst us been chiefly confined to this day; but such deviations from the original observance are too common to excite the least surprise.

* "Apud vetustiores authores festi Ascensionis Christi peculiaris mentio nulla fit, sed comprehendunt illud sub Quinquaginta illis festis diebus post Pascha." Hospinian *De Festis Christianorum*, p. 86.

† *Gentleman's Magazine*, for August 1787, vol. lvii. p. 718, note.

‡ *The Discovery of Witchcraft* by Reginald Scot, p. 152, folio, Lond. 1665.

Pentecost: Whitsuntide. This term was anciently used with two very different meanings; first, as denoting the whole fifty days from Easter to Whitsuntide, *i.e.* the Paschal solemnity, which in early times was one continued festival in commemoration of Christ's resurrection; and secondly, as signifying that particular day on which the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles. In this more restricted sense it was called Pentecost because it was the fiftieth day from the *Passover;* and *Whitsunday, i.e. White-Sunday,* either metaphorically from the light which then diffused itself amongst the apostles; or,—and this seems more probable—from its being one of the two principal seasons of public baptism, when the baptized wore white garments, or *chrisoms,* in token of the spiritual purity they received at the font, and their promised whiteness of life for the future. It must not, however be concealed that Wheatley mentions a curious letter of Gerard Langbain's upon this subject, giving a very different meaning to the word. From his account it would seem, that Langbain, who was a perfect glutton of Bodleian manuscripts, stumbled upon one, which in substance states, "that it was a custom among our ancestors upon this day to give all the milk of their ewes and kine to the poor for the love of God, in order to qualify themselves to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which milk being then—as it is still in some counties,—called Whitemeat, &c. therefore this day from that custom took the name of Whitsunday."*

* Wheatley's account is as follows—"The letter I have is in manuscript, but seems to be a transcript of a printed letter of Langbain, dated from Oxford on Whitsun-Eve, 1650, and writ in answer to a friend that had enquired of him the original of the word, Whitsuntide, in which after he had hinted at some other opinions he gives the above-mentioned account in the following words.—"Extat illic (in Bodleianâ) MS. hoc titulo, *De Solemnitatibus Sanctorum Feriandis.*

This day also, like those immediately preceding it, had its peculiar superstition. Amongst other things it was believed that whatever was asked of Heaven on Whitsunday would be infallibly granted, a notable instance of which we have in the *Echo* of a certain fanatic,* who called himself Arise Evans, and who tells us, "hearing some say that whatsoever one did ask of God upon Whitsunday morning at the instant when the sun arose and play'd, God would grant it him; having a charitable beliefe of the report, being willing to try all the ways possible to obtain my petition, I arose betimes on Whitsunday morning, and went up a hill, at a place called *Gole Ronnw,* to see the sun arise—Gole Ronnw in Eng-

Author est anonymus, qui de Festo Pentecostes agens hoc habet: 'Judæi quatuor præcipua celebrant solemnia; Pascha, Pentecosten, Scenopegiam, Encœnia. Nos autem duo de illis celebramus, Pascha et Pentecosten, sed alia ratione. Illi celebrant Pentecosten, quia tunc legem perceperunt; nos autem ideo, quia tunc Spiritus Sanctus missus est discipulis. Illi susceperunt tabulis lapideis extrinsecus scripta, ad designandam eorum duritiem, quoniam usque ad spiritualem intellectum literæ non pertingebant; sed Spiritus Sanctus datus est sexaginta duobus discipulis in corde, digito Dei spiritualem intellectum intus dedicante. Ideoque Dies intellectus dicitur Witsonenday, vel item Vitsonenday; quia prædecessores nostri omne lac ovium et vaccarum suarum solebant dare pauperibus illo die, pro Dei amore, ut puriores efficirentur ad recipiendum Donum Spiritus Sancti.'—Quocum, fere ad verbum, consentit manuscriptus alter hoc titulo *Doctrina quomodo Curatus possit sanctorum vitas per annum populo denunciare.* Et certe quod de lacte vaccarum refert, illud percognitum habeo, in agro Hamptoniensi (an et alibi nescio) decimas lacticiniorum venire vulgo sub hoc nomine, *The Whites of Kine;* apud Leicestrenses etiam Lacticinia vulgariter dicuntur *Whitemeat.*"—*Wheatley's Rational Illustration of Common Prayer,* p. 241, Folio, Lond. 1720.

* *An Echo to the voice from Heaven,* or a narration of the life and manner of the special calling and visions of *Arise Evans.* 12mo. Blackfriars, 1652, p. 9.

lish is, they will give light—and seeing the sun at its rising skip, play, dance, and turn about like a wheel, I fell down upon my knees."

At this particular season were used to be celebrated the so-called *Whitsun-ales*. Of the meaning and derivation of this word I shall speak presently; the sport, or feast is thus described by Rudder.* "Two persons are chosen previous to the meeting, to be lord and lady of the yule† who dress as suitably as they can to the characters they assume. A large empty barn, or some such building, is provided for the lord's hall, and fitted up with seats to accommodate the company. Here they assemble to dance and to regale in the best manner their circumstances and the place will afford, and each young fellow treats his girl with a ribband or favour. The lord and lady honour the hall with their presence, attended by the steward, sword bearer, purse-bearer, and mace-bearer, with their several badges or ensigns of office. They have likewise a page, or train-bearer, and a jester drest in a party-coloured jacket, whose ribaldry and gesticulation contribute not a little to the entertainment of some part of the company. The lord's music, consisting generally of a pipe and tabor is employed to conduct the dance. All these figures, handsomely represented in basso-relievo, stand in the north wall of the nave of Cirencester church, which vouches sufficiently for the antiquity of the custom. Some people think it a commemoration of the ancient *drink-lean*, a day of festivity formerly observed by the tenants and vassals of the lord of the fee within his manor, the memory of which, on

* *History of Gloucestershire*, p. 23. Folio, Cirencester. 1779.

† *Yule*, i.e. the festival. This affords a sufficient proof of what I have stated above,—that the word, *yule*, was not originally restricted to Christmas, but meant a *festival* generally.

account of the jollity of those meetings, the people have thus preserved ever since. It may notwithstanding have its rise in Druidism,* as on these occasions they always erect a May-pole, which is an eminent sign of it. I shall just remark that the mace is made of silk finely plaited with ribbands on the top, and filled with spices and perfume for such of the company to smell to as desire it. Does not this afford some light towards discovering the original use, and account for the name of the mace, now carried in ostentation before the steward of the court on court days, and before the chief magistrate in corporations; as the presenting of spices by great men at their entertainments was a very ancient practice."

From what Aubrey says, these Whitsun-ales supplied the place of poor-rates, which did not exist at all in his time; but indeed there is something so delightful in his picture of the general happiness of the lower classes in the age immediately preceding his own—mixed up, it must be owned, with more questionable matters,—that I can not resist the temptation of transcribing it: "No younger brothers then were by the custom and constitution of the realm to betake themselves to trades, but were churchmen or retainers, and servants to great men, rid good horses, now and then took a purse, and their blood, that was bred of the good tables of their masters, was upon every occasion freely let out in their quarrels; it was then too common among their masters to have feuds with one another; and their servants at market, or where they met

* *May!*—unquestionably it had. It would be hard indeed to find any popular festival that did not spring from some ancient religious observance, and Druidism being the earliest known form of religion in England, to what other source can we refer them? That Druidism itself was borrowed from the east is another matter.

in that slashing age, did commonly bang one another's bucklers. Then an esquire when he rode to town, was attended by eight or ten men in blue coats with badges. The lords—then lords in deed as well as title—lived in their countries like petty kings,—had jura regalia belonging to their seignories, had their castle and boroughs, and sent burgesses to the Lower House; had gallows within their liberties, where they could try, condemn, draw and hang; never went to London but in parliament-time, or once a year to do their homage and duty to the king. The lords of manors kept good houses in their countries, did eat in their Gothick halls at the high table—in Scotland still the architecture of a lord's house is thus, viz. a great open hall, a kitchen and buttery, a parlour, over which a chamber for my lord and lady; all the rest lye in common, viz. the men-servants in the hall, the women in a common room, or oriele, the folk at the side tables—*oriele* is an *ear*, but here it signifies a little room at the upper end of the hall, where stands a square or round table, perhaps in the old times was an oratory; in every old Gothick hall is one. The meat was served up by *watch-words*. Jacks are but an invention of the other age; the poor boys did turn the spits, and licked the dripping-pan, and grew to be huge, lusty knaves. The beds of the servants and retainers were in the great halls, as now in the guard-chamber, &c. The hearth was commonly in the middle, as at most colleges, whence the saying, *Round about our Coal-fire*. Here in the halls were the mummings, cob-loaf stealing, and great number of old Christmas plays performed. Every baron and gentleman of estate kept great horses for a man at arms. Lords had their armories to furnish some hundreds of men. The halls of justices of the peace were dreadful to behold; the skreens were garnish'd with corslets and

helmets gaping with open mouth, with coats of mail, lances, pikes, halberts, brown bills, batterdashers, bucklers, and the modern calivers and petronils (in King Charles the First's time) turned into muskets and pistols. Then were entails in fashion, a good prop for monarchy. Destroying of manours began temp. Henry VIII. but now common; whereby the mean people live lawless, nobody to govern them, they care for no body, having no dependance on any body. By this method, and by the selling of the church lands, is the ballance of the government quite altered and put into the hands of the common people. No ale-houses, nor yet inns, were there then, unless upon great roads. When they had a mind to drink they went to the fryaries; and when they travell'd, they had entertainment at the religious houses for three days, if occasion so long requir'd. The meeting of the gentry was not then at tipling houses, but in the fields or forests, with their hawks and hounds, with their bugle-horns in silken bordries.* This part (north of Wiltshire) very much abounded with forests and parks. Thus were good spirits kept up, and good horses and hides made; whereas now the gentry of the nation are so effeminated by coaches, they are so far from managing great horses, that they know not how to ride hunting-horses, besides the spoiling of several trades dependant. In the last age every yeoman almost kept a sparrow-hawk; and it was a divertisement for young gentlewomen to manage sparrow-hawks and merlins.

"In King Henry the Eighth's time one Dame Julian†

* *Borderies*, i.e. BALDRICKS, or girdles; but I do not remember having ever met with the word so spelt before.

† This, I presume, alludes to a work by Juliana Berners, or Barnes, prioress of Sopwell, near St. Albans. If so, Aubrey is not quite correct in his account of it, for it is only the portion, called the GESTYS

writ the art of hawking which is in English verse, which is in Wilton library. This country was then a lovely champain, as that about Sheeston and Cots-wold; very few enclosures unless near houses. In my remembrance much hath been enclos'd, and every year more and more is taken in. Anciently the *leghs*—now corruptly called *slaights*—i. e. pastures, were noble large grounds. Then were a world of labouring people maintained by the plough, as yet in Northamptonshire, &c. *There were no rates for the poor in my grandfather's days; but for Kingston St. Michael (no small parish) the church-ale at Whitsuntide did the business. In every parish is, or was, a church-house, to which belong'd spits, crocks, &c., utensils for dressing provision. Here the housekeepers met and were merry, and gave their charity.* The young people were there too, and had dancing, bowling, shooting at butts &c., the ancients sitting gravely by and looking on. All things were civil and without scandal. *This church-ale is doubtless derived from the αγαπαι or love-feasts*, mention'd in the New Testament. Mr. A. Wood assures me that there were no alms-houses, at least they were very scarce, before the Reformation; that over against Christ Church, Oxon, is one of the ancientest. In every church was a poor man's box, but I never remember'd the use of it; nay, there was one at great inns, as I remember it was before the wars. Before the Reformation, at their vigils or revels, they sate up all night fasting and praying. The night before the day of the dedication of the church, certain officers were chosen for gathering the money for charitable

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OF VENERY, that is in verse. It is a black-letter volume printed by Wynkyn de Worde, with the lengthy title of "Treatyses perteynynge to Hawkynge and Huntynge; with other dyvers playsant matters, belongynge unto Noblesse: &c. &c." Folio. Westmestre, 1496.

uses. Since the Reformation and inclosures aforesaid these parts have swarm'd with poor people."*

The pith of this extract, so far as concerns our present purpose, is no doubt, that part which is given in italics; but it is altogether curious as a picture of the old times, over which Aubrey laments with so much unction, stigmatizing every improvement as the root of all evil.—To return to our Whitsuntide.

It seems to be agreed on all hands, that the word *ale*, to which allusion has so often been made above, means a festival, and indeed, its occurrence in the compound words *bride-ale, church-ale,* sometimes called *quarter-ale, leet-ale, scot-ale, lamb-ale, clerk-ale, give-ale,* sufficiently proves that this was its general use and meaning.† But it appears to have been employed somewhat laxly, as in general is the case with words that are most popularly used. Thus in the following passage we see clearly enough, that it means

* *Aubrey's Miscellanies on Several Curious Subjects*, p. 28. 8vo. 1714.

† *Scot-ales* were, as the word imports, *ales* or *feasts*, maintained by the joint contributions of the revellers, and were generally held in houses of public resort. *Leet-ales* were feasts held at the *leets* or manorial courts, and probably the *drink-lean*, mentioned above, signified much the same thing. *Quarter-ales* or *church-ales*, would seem to have been established to help out the funds for the repairing of chapels, as appears from the following quotation from *Sir R. Worsley's History of the Isle of Wight* (p. 210)—"If the quarter shall need at any time to make a *quarter-ale or church-ale for the maintenance of the chapel.*" The *Clerks-ale* took place in the Easter holydays, and was, as Warton tells us (*Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, vol. iii. p. 128), "for the clerk's private benefit and the solace of the neighbourhood;" or in other words, it was a mode of collecting his dues and eking out his salary. The *Give-ales* were feasts of an entirely gratuitous nature, whereas all the former may to a certain extent, be called compulsory; they arose out of legacies and donations, and being generally blended with religious objects—such as masses for the dead, lighting the altar of some particular saint, &c.—they were at first dispensed in the church, and still more frequently in the church-yard.

the brewage itself, which was especially made for some particular festival. "The parishioners of Elveston and Okebrook, in Derbyshire, agree jointly to brew four *ales*, and every ale of one quarter of malt, betwixt this and the feast of St. John the Baptist next coming. And that every inhabitant of the said town of Okebrook shall be at the several ales. And every husband and his wife shall pay two-pence, every cottager one penny; and all the inhabitants of Elveston, shall have and receive all the profits and advantages coming of the said ales to the use and behoof of the said church of Elveston." *

From all this it seems to me quite clear that *ale*, which now is restricted to mean the liquor only,—except in composition,—originally signified a *festival*, and that the brewage from malt got its name from being the established drink at those festivals. As to its derivation, I feel as confident as any one has a right to be on so difficult a subject, that it is only a corruption of *yule*, as *yule* itself is of *huly*, and my supposition is farther strengthened by the fact of *yale* being a common pronunciation of ale in some of our provinces.

Restoration-Day.—The 29th of May was at one time celebrated as being the anniversary both of the birth and the restoration of Charles II. The king's statue, which stood in the centre of the old Royal Exchange, used to be decked out with boughs of oak, and in the north it is still customary for the lower classes to wear oak-leaves in their hats, to commemorate Charles's escape from his pursuers by hiding in an oak. At Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the boys of one faction have a taunting rhyme of

"Royal oak
The Whigs to provoke;"

* See the *Archæologia*, vol. xii. p. 13. The writer however quotes from Warton.

while those of the other, wearing plane-tree leaves in their hats, reply with,

"Plane-tree leaves!
The church-folk are thieves."

In Devonshire, the young rustics of Tiverton, dressed up in the style of the 17th century and armed with swords, parade the streets and gather contributions. At their head is a man called Oliver, in a black suit with a cord bound about him like a tether, and his face and hands smeared with soot and grease. These are followed by another troop in the same costume, and each man bearing an oak-branch, and behind these again come four others carrying a kind of throne, made of oaken boughs, on which a child is seated. The jest of this dull pageant is in the capering of the Oliver, the insults heaped upon him by the rabble of boys, and his punishing them when he can catch them, by rubbing them over with the grime and grease from his own face.

Trinity Sunday.—In all the ancient liturgies this feast was looked upon as an octave of Pentecost.* It appears to have been instituted by Gregory the Fourth, when he removed *All Saints' Day* to Nŏvember, because the harvest being then gathered in, the supply of food would be more abundant.† But it was not introduced into this country 'till the time of Archbishop Becket, who ordained it for no better reason as it would seem, than because it was the anniversary of his first mass after his consecration.‡

* *Wheatley's Rat. Illustration*, &c. p. 245.

† "Verùm Greg. quartus hoc festū martyrum transtulit ad Cal. Novembris, ut tunc collectis terræ frugibus convenienter ad hoc festum possent copiosius victualia inveniri, instituens tunc fieri festum non solum apostolorum et martyrum sed etiam Trinitatis et angelorum, &c."—*G. Durandi Rationale Div. Offi.* lib. vii. c. 34.

‡ "Consecratus igitur iii Nonas Junii, anno ætatis suæ circiter xl, astantibus omnibus ferè suffraganeis ecclesiæ Cantuariensis præsentibus

Of late years, a fair has been held at Deptford on the following Monday, which is said to have originated in the trifling pastimes of the visitors assembled to see the master and brethren of the Trinity House, on their annual visit to the Trinity House at Deptford. Each year brought with it some addition to the previous amusements, 'till at last the whole, from jingling matches and a show or two, swelled into a regular fair. And with this concludes all that is worthy of note in the month of May.

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nunc ibidem. Hic post consecrationem suam instituit festivitatem principalem S. Trinitatis annis singulis in perpetuum celebrandam, quo die primam missam suam celebravit."—*Anglia Sacra*, p. 8. Folio. London, 1691.

POPULAR ERRORS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

Poison-Diet. — It is not perhaps likely that many young ladies will be taken with a fancy for feeding upon poisons, yet the case is not altogether an imaginary one. The beautiful Venezia Stanley, Lady Digby, wife to the celebrated Sir Kenelm, is an instance of this. To preserve those charms, which had been the admiration, or the envy, of all who came within their influence, she had brought herself to feed upon vipers, and capons fattened on vipers, and in consequence she was found one morning lifeless in her bed, her face reclining upon one hand.* At least, as she had been labouring under no previous illness, the snails and vipers bore the blame of having killed her. I have seen a picture of her by Petitot, which certainly goes far to excuse the unusual means she took to preserve her beauty. According to this picture she had a full voluptuous form, a fair complexion—pale indeed and clear as the palest and clearest lily—and rich auburn locks flowing in profusion down to the shoulders, and over her white swelling bosom. There is another

* May 1st 1683. She was buried in Christ Church, London.

picture of her and her two sons painted by Vandyke, in which she is teaching them the use of the orrery, and a miniature of her by Peter Oliver, which so late as 1842 was at Strawberry Hill, when the whole collection was brought to the hammer. The story of the snail-and-viper-diet is told by Pennant, though he does not say upon what authority.* I have however a distinct recollection of having read a similar account elsewhere but with more details, and it is from this strong impression upon my mind that I have added the particulars of the way in which she was found upon the morning of her death. Even the grave Clarendon alludes to her as being "a lady of an extraordinary beauty."

It was not, however, so much to show the danger of poison-eating to the ladies themselves, as to their lovers, that I commenced this article, when the recollection of the beautiful Venezia came across me, and led me away from my purpose. It is time then to come to the story told by Camerarius, which, stript of all that is not absolutely essential, amounts to this. A maiden of surpassing beauty was presented by an Indian king to Alexander the Great, who had been accustomed to feed upon poison so long that it produced no injurious effect upon her. Luckily Aristotle happened to see the dangerous stranger, and judging by the serpent-like sparkling of her eyes how matters stood with her, he exclaimed, "take care what you do, O Alexander; there is peril in this woman." And so the result proved. Those, who ventured to touch her perished in a state of intoxication. The moral that is hidden under this fable is too obvious to need explanation, † but there can be little doubt that it was based upon popular belief. Paracelsus, in speaking

* *Pennant's Journey from Chester to London*, p. 336. 4to. London. 1782.

† *Camerarius*, Cent. 1, p. 263, cap. 69.

of the basilisk says that he carries a poison in his eyes, * which he compares to those of women under certain constitutional derangements. At the same time it must be allowed that Paracelsus was no friend to the fair sex and was even too glad to catch hold of any story to their disadvantage, while Pliny † on the other hand goes so far as to say, that if a woman stand bare against the weather it will secure sailors and passengers from all tempests—a new sort of lightning conductor, and very profitable to be known by farmers as well as seamen. We have the less reason to doubt its efficacy, when Pliny upon the authority of Democritus ‡ relates the yet greater miracle of women, that they can be made to speak truth in their sleep, and by a very simple process. Take out the tongue of a live frog, but mind that no other part adhere to it; then, having first flung the creature into water, apply the extracted part upon the heart of a sleeping woman just where you can feel its palpitation; to whatever you ask she will return a true answer.

The Owl.—Amongst most people he has ever laboured under a bad name as a bird of ill omen, and many are the stories told of this unlucky prophet both in our own and other countries. He seems to be particularly fond of attending the bed of the dying, and letting them know by his presence that there is no hope for them. Thus, when Charles Frederick, Duke of Juliers and Treves, was

* *Of the Nature of Things*, book i. p. 6.

† "Jam primùm abigi grandines turbinesque, contra fulgura ipsa in mense nudata; in navigando quidem tempestates etiam sine menstruis." C. Plinii Sec. Nat. Hist. lib. xxviii. cap. 23.

‡ "Democritus quidem tradit si quis extrahat ranæ viventi linguam, nulla alia corporis parte adherente, ipsaque dimissa in aquam, imponat supra cordis palpitationem mulieri dormienti, quæcumque interrogaverit vera responsuram." C. Plinii Sec. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxii. cap. 18.

struggling at Rome with the disease, of which he afterwards died, an owl was seen and heard for many days upon the palace at Cleves, and in the broad day-light, who was scarcely to be driven away from the towers by any missiles. * The learned Pighius, however, who tells the story, has the grace to observe that he does not think such things are altogether to be believed, though he deems it right they should be recorded.

The Ethiopians also, and the Egyptians who borrowed many rites from them, accounted the owl a fatal augury, and its image was used, like the bull's head among more modern races, as a messenger of death. So great was the respect paid by these people to their king, that upon his sending the image of this bird to any culprit, it was considered as a token that he should immediately kill himself, and to fail in doing so, or to seek in any way to escape from the fate prescribed, was considered disgraceful to the condemned no less than to his country, suicide in this case being deemed a virtue. A story is told of an Egyptian mother, who exceeding the virtue, or the cruelty, of the elder Brutus, actually strangled with her own girdle the son who was attempting to fly from this agreeable invitation.†

* "Eodem ferè, quo Romæ cum morbo conflictabatur æger, tempore, bubo Clivis per plures dies in palatio visus ac auditus mediâ luce, qui vix jaculis abigi a turribus ac tectis tum potuit." *Hercules Prodicius.* Per Stephanum Pighium, p. 406. 12mo. Coloniæ, 1609.

† "Hoc igitur mortis signum illud esse crediderim, quod ab lictore ferebatur ad damnatum publico judicio, præsertim apud Ethiopas, a quibus Ægyptios aiunt multa rituum genera mutuatos; nam pios eos ante omnes extitisse, familiaritates eorum commerciaque cum diis, et invicem agitata convivia, de quibus et Homerus et alii scripserunt, facile indicant ita fuisse tunc hominibus persuasum. Eo verò signo viso reus sponte sibi mortem consciscebat, magno et sibi et patriæ dedecori futurus, nisi fecisset; adeo illi regem suum ut numen venerabantur, vulgòque adorabant. Atque ferunt quemdam per hoc morti

Vulnerary Plants.—"Some empiric surgeons in Scotland take a journey to the Picts' wall every summer to gather vulnerary plants, which they say grow plentifully there, and are very effectual, being planted by the Romans for surgical uses."*

Ghost-Seers. (Oral).—According to a popular superstition, people born between twelve and one see ghosts.

Saint John's Wort and Vervain.—Among the peasantry of the Northern countries the devil is believed to hold these herbs in abhorrence, from its bearing the name and being a sacred attribute of Saint John the Baptist. Sir Walter Scott says, "I remember a popular rhyme supposed to be addressed to a young woman by the devil, who attempted to seduce her, in the shape of a handsome young man:

> "Gin you wish to be leman mine,
> Do off the *Saint John's Wort* and the Vervine."

By his repugnance to these sacred plants his mistress discovered the cloven foot."†

Being thus potent against the devil himself, it was of course irresistible when employed against his subordinate agents, the witches. Accordingly we read in Drayton,

> "The night-shade strows to work him ill,
> Therewith the vervain and her dill,
> That hindreth witches of their will."

The Saint John's Wort was also called *Hypericon*,‡ from

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destinatum, cum de fuga cœpisset cogitare, priusquam a periculo se abstraheret, zona a matre strangulatum." *Joannis Pierii Valeriani* HIEROGLYPHICA, lib. xx. cap. xix. p. 203, D. folio, Lugduni. 1610. See also *Diodorus Siculus* (lib. iii.) who tells this same story of a mother strangling her son with her own girdle upon his attempting to fly after the messenger of death had been sent to him.

* *Burton's Admirable Curiosities*, p. 38, 12mo. London. 1737.

† *Scott's Poetical Works*, vol. iv. p. 277.

‡ "Hypericum à Gr. ὑπερικὸν quoniam existimantur folia habere plusquam viginti foramina."—"Perforata, quia si inspiciamus herbam

two Greek words, ὑπερ and εἴκοσι,—that is, above twenty —because the leaf is supposed to have above twenty small perforations, which may be seen if it be held up to the light. Amongst the dabblers in magic it had the name of fuga demonum—demon expeller—from its imaginary power of keeping off the devils; but to be efficacious it should be gathered on Saint John's Eve. It is thus described in Pliny—"*Hypericon*, which some call *Chamæpitys*, others *Corion*. This herbe shooteth forth many branches, which be small and slender, of a cubit in length, and red withall; in leafe it resembleth rue; the smell is quicke, hot, and piercing; the seed, which it beareth within certain cods, is blacke, and the same ripeneth together with barley. The nature of the seed is astringent; it doth incrassat and thicken humours, and stoppeth a laske."*

The anti-demoniacal character of vervain is no doubt a relick of the pagan times, for amongst the Romans *verbena*, or *vervine*, signified the holy herb gathered from the sacred place of the Capitol, with which the priests and heralds were crowned when about to make treaties, or declare war. By a corruption of the word it came in time to be used for any sacred bough, such as the myrtle, the olive, or the laurel.†

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hanc inter lucem et oculos nostros mediam, ejus folia quasi perforata apparent." Vide *Minsheu*, sub voce *Saint John's Wort*.

* A *laske* is a diarrhea. Having given the above translation from quaint old Philemon Holland (vol. ii. p. 255, fol. London. 1601) it may be as well to place by its side the original—"Eadem præstat hypericon, quam alii chamæpytin, alii corion appellant, oleraceo frutice, tenui, cubitali, rubente, folio rutæ, odore acri, semine in siliqua nigro maturescente cum hordeo. Natura semini spissandi; alvum sistit, &c." C. Plinii Sec Nat. Hist. lib. xxvi. cap. 53.

† Servius in his comments on the twelfth book of Virgil, verse 120, (no date, page, or signature) says "propriè est herba sacra sumpta de loco sacro Capitolii, q̃ coronabatur fæciales et pater patratus fœdera

Fig-tree Candles.—"Many fig-trees are found under ground by the river Wever, which the people imagine buried there ever since Noah's flood. They cut pieces of such wooll (wood) small, and use them for candles, which give a good light." The author adds, "that such woollen (wooden) candles have long snuff, and yet, which is a wonder, in falling down do no harm, tho' they drop into tow, flax, or the like.*"

Prognostics by Water.—"In the parish of North Taunton, near a house called Bath, is a pit, but in the winter a pool, not maintained by any spring, but by the fall of rain-water, and dry in summer, of which it is observed (saith Dr. Fuller) that before the death of any prince, or other accident of importance, it will, tho' in a hot and dry season, overflow its banks, and so continue 'till that which is prognosticated is fulfilled."†

Numbers, Numbering.—The virtue, which Touchstone so zealously maintains to lurk in that little monosyllable, *if*, is much inferior to the qualities, which at one time were supposed to reside in numbers, and that not only by the vulgar, but by very sage folks, who indited huge folios for the benefit of the unenlightened, and who were therefore admitted as of right into the guild of philosophers.

One of the most popular superstitions connected with figures was a belief in the impossibility, or in the danger, of counting certain objects—druidical monuments for the most part, though sometimes any steps or columns were supposed to be under the like spell. Stonehenge had a superstitious belief of this kind attached to it. The

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facturi vel bella inducturi; abusivè tamen etiam verbenas vocamus omnes frodes sacratas, ut est laurus, oliva, vel myrtus."

* *Burton's Admirable Curiosities*, p. 24.

† Ibid. p. 46.

anonymous writer of *An Account of Stonehenge and the Barrows round it*,* observes, in the dignified tone of a grave antiquarian, "another instance of vulgar folly is the notion that all the wonder of the work consists in the difficulty of counting the stones, and with this task the infinite numbers of people, who visit this place, busy themselves. This seems to be the remains of superstition, not yet gone out of people's heads since Druid time."

The last remark is a mere gratuitous supposition, flung out at hazard, and without a single proof offered in support of it. Any certain information on the subject would have been highly desirable.

Another instance of this superstition may be found at Salkeld in Cumberland in the case of Long Meg and her daughters, a very goodly family, being no less than sixty-five in number, according to the report of those, who in defiance of the general belief have had the temerity to count them. These ladies are huge masses of stone, most of which are yet standing upright, and crown an eminence on the river Eden, about half a mile north of Penrith, in the Parish of Addingham. They are rough and unhewn, and form nearly an exact circle of about three hundred and fifty paces in circumference, some being of grey, or blue, limestone, while others are flint, and the most of them granite. Of those that are standing, many measure from twelve to fifteen feet in girt, and ten feet in height, but others are of a much inferior size. The most remarkable of Meg's family is an upright column on the southern side of the circle. It seems to be naturally square, if such a thing be possible, without any help from art, and is formed of the red free-

* P. 4. 12mo. London. No Date.

stone, which abounds in this part of the country. In girt it is nearly fifteen feet; in height it towers much above its sisters, being eighteen feet high, and while each of its angles corresponds with a point of the compass, one faces the circle, as if looking upon it sidewise. In that part of the round, which is nearest to the column, four large blocks form a square, seeming to indicate that they once served to support a table-stone, or else had enclosed a space more holy than the rest. On the north, east, and west, the appearance of an entrance is marked out by two large stones, with a greater interval between them than between any others in the circle. Meg herself is said to weigh about sixteen stones and a half, though Hutchinson, from whom I derive that somewhat doubtful piece of information, has forgotten to state upon what occasion her granite ladyship was put into the scales, and her weight ascertained with so much nicety. Perhaps the result was got at in the form of a geometric problem; as, thus;—given the height and breadth of any damsel, how much will she weigh?

Sorry am I to be forced to add,—but truth demands it—that Meg and her progeny were no better than they should be. Not to mince the matter, they were witches, and hence on presuming to visit the place where they now lie, and which happened to be sacred, they were metamorphosed into granite as a punishment for their intrusion. It must, however, be confessed that no great reliance is to be placed in the numbers that I have assigned to the family on the authority of the county historian,* inasmuch as it is impossible to count them, and of the many persons who have made the trial no

* Hutchinson in his "History of Cumberland," vol. i p. 226, gives a long account of these druidical remains.

two were ever found to agree in their reckoning. So at least say the people, and it was to illustrate their superstition in regard to numbers that I have dwelt upon the legend.

In the Isle of Man the superstition is reversed. There within Peel Castle is a vault in which are thirteen pillars supporting the church above, and the people firmly believe that the stranger who visits this cavern out of curiosity, and omits to count the pillars, will do something to occasion his being confined there.*

In regard to the qualities inherent in odd and even numbers, there seems to be some difference of opinion amongst the learned in such high mysteries. Pliny assures us that odd numbers were more effectual than even, and were a thing of the greatest consequence to be observed in fevers.† Philo Judæus, who flourished at Alexandria in the time of Caligula, tells us that nature delights in a septenary; the planets, he says, are seven; the Bear is composed of seven stars; the changes of the moon take place once in a se'nnight, that is to say, in each week she accomplishes a full quarter; children born at seven months are prosperous, while those who come into the world at eight are unlucky; the third septenary, i. e., twenty-one, is the termination of a man's growth; and many other instances he adduces of the virtue residing in

* See Waldron's Isle of Man, p. 19 12mo. 1731.

† "Cur impares numeros ad omnia vehementiores credimus; idque in febribus dierum observatione intelligitur?" C. Plinii Sec. Nat. Hist. lib. xxviii. cap. 5. So far from doubting the truth of the dogma put thus interrogatively, Pliny uses it in confirmation of other matters, saying, "libet hanc partem singulorum quoque conscientia coarguere." It was a fact too generally known and admitted to be called in question, and might therefore be safely appealed to in corroboration of other less demonstrated opinions.

the number seven; but as those already given are quite as cogent as the remainder, it is unnecessary to repeat them.*

The Romans found as many and as valid reasons for admiring the number three, as Philo did for his eulogies on seven; indeed, they are much after the same fashion of logic; as, for instance—Jove's thunder was three-forked; Neptune's trident was three-pronged; Pluto's house-dog, Cerberus, was three-headed; the Furies were three; and Diana was of a threefold nature, being Diana upon earth, Hecate in the shades below, and Luna in the sky above. Nothing can be more convincing.

Pythagoras formed a whole system of philosophy upon numbers, and even went so far as to declare that, according to the odd or even numbers in a man's name, blindness, lameness, or any such casualties, will fall upon his left or right side.† But it is not often that the philosophy of numbers, as it was expressed both by the Greeks and Romans, is so intelligible as this; at times they dived into depths, or soared up into heights, whither it is no easy affair to follow them; as when they tell us that the soul is united to the body by the force of numbers, and that so long as the numbers remain the union con-

* "Χαίρει δε ἡ φύσις ἑβδομαῖι &c." *Philonis Judæi Opera*, vol. i. p. 45. London. 1742. But the most sensible part of Philo's observations is on the Creation. He says, that it is idle to talk of the world having been made in seven days, according to our ideas of the words, as time could not exist till after the world was created. When however, he adds, that the phrase is to be understood as meaning a perfect senary he is not quite intelligible. Those who wish to grapple with this mystery will find it fully discussed by our author in the *Sacrorum Legum Allegor.* lib. i.

† "E Pythagoræ inventis non temerè fallere, impositivorum nominum imparem vocalium numerum clauditates, oculive orbitatem, ac similes casus, dextris assignare partibus, parem lævis." *C. Plinii Sec. Nat. Hist.* lib. xxviii. cap. 6.

tinues, but on their surcease the secret power is destroyed which held soul and matter together. In this way has been explained the poet's line,

"Explebo numerum reddarque tenebris."
"I shall have fulfilled my number and be restored to darkness."*

The Romans had at least a semblance of reason for their preference of odd numbers, since they believed, as Servius tells us in his notes on Virgil's eighth eclogue, that the gods above delight in them, while the deities of the shades below rejoice in even numbers. It would seem to be somewhat contradictory of this doctrine that seven should be held particularly dangerous to males. If we may believe Pliny, they who were made to die of hunger in prison, never survived the seventh day; and Aristotle mentions several animals, who never lived beyond the seventh year. The number, sixty-three, which is a multiple of seven by nine, is particularly fatal to old men, as we learn from Aulus Gellius,† who observes that all of advanced age meet with some disease or misfortune, or the loss of life itself, at that period, whence it acquired the name of *climacteric*. He then goes on to give a letter from Augustus Cæsar to his grandson Caius, in which this superstitious feeling is simply yet beautifully

* Upon this Rhodiginus observes, "Ex hac item occultiore facultate scribit Aurelius Macrobius, numerorum certa constitutamque rationem animas sociare corporibus, qui numeri dum supersint, perseverat corpus animari; quum vero deficiant, arcanam illam vim solvi quâ societas ipsa constabat." *Ludovici Cælii Rhodigini Lectiones Antiquæ*, lib. xxii. cap. 6, p. 1034, folio. 1599.

† "Observatum in multâ hominum memoriâ, expertumque est in senioribus plerisque omnibus, sexagesimum tertium vitæ annum cum periculo et clade aliquâ venire, aut corporis morbique gravioris, aut vitæ interitus, aut animi ægritudinis; propterea, qui rerum verborumque istiusmodi studio tenentur, eum ætatis annum appellant κλιμακτηρικόν." *Auli Gellii Noctes Atticæ*, lib. xv. cap. 7.

expressed. "Be of good cheer, my beloved Caius, whom, so help me heaven!—I ever long for when thou art absent. But more particularly do my eyes demand my Caius on days like yesterday, when I hope, wherever you were, that you celebrated in health and joy my sixty-fourth birth-day; for, as you see, I have escaped my sixty-third year, that common climacteric of old men."*

Bodin, however, assures us that this peril, belonging to seven and its multiples, affects only men, while it is six that brings danger to women; and for this excellent reason; women came to puberty in their twelfth year, whereas the same constitutional change does not take place with the male sex till two years later.† The argument, as Sir Lucius in the play says of a quarrel, would be only spoiled by explanation.

As if in continuation of the same contradictory system, it was reckoned highly unlucky for thirteen people to meet at table, the odd number in this case losing its usual good character. It would seem, therefore, that the exceptions to the rule of the "gods rejoicing in odd numbers" is pretty numerous.

From the Greeks and Romans the traditional superstition in regard to numbers came down to the moderns

* "Have, mi Caii, meus ocellus jucundissimus, quem semper medius fidius desidero cum a me abes; sed præcipuè diebus talibus qualis est hodiernus oculi mei requirunt meum Caium, quem, ubicunque hoc die fuisti, spero lætum et benevalentem celebrasse quartum et sexagesimum natalem meum; nam, ut vides, κλιμακτῆρα communem seniorum omnium tertium et sexagesimum annum evasimus." *Auli Gellii Noctes Atticæ*, lib. xv. cap. 7.

† "At numero Deus impare gaudet, ut ait poeta," (*Virgilii Eclog.* viii.) "et impares numeri maribus tribuuntur; nam quòd Seneca scribit, 'septimus quisque annus ætati notam imprimit,' de maribus tantum dictum est, nam fœminis quisque sextus ætati notam aliquam indidit, ut cum mares anno decimo quarto, fœminæ duodecimo pubescant." *Bodinus, De Republicâ*, lib. iv. cap. ii. p. 414. folio. Paris. 1586.

though with many alterations. Werensal in enumerating the fears and precautions of one under this belief says, that if sick he will never take the prescribed pills in an even number—"ægrotus præscriptas pilulas pari numero nunquam deglutiet;"* and we read in Delrio that the seventh son of a seventh son has a singular gift of curing fevers, provided no female birth has intervened,† and they are born in legitimate wedlock.

This, long as it may seem to many, is only a slight taste of the various superstitions connected with the subject. But enough has probably been detailed to satisfy the mass of readers, who would not, I fear, derive much pleasure from any attempt to explain the Pythagorean philosophy of numbers, if indeed it be capable of explanation.

Les Hans. (France).—A sort of spirits that inhabit certain houses, and every night torment the inmates by making a terrible uproar. Noise and disorder seem to be the natural element of these goblins, and in consequence the houses, which they have unluckily selected for their vagaries, generally end by being deserted.‡

Revenans (Ghosts; France.) Ghosts are spirits, which

* *Werenfelsii Opuscula*, vol. ii. p. 634. 4to. Basileæ, 1718.

† "Tale curationis donum, sed a febribus tantum sanandi, habere putantur in Flandriâ quotquot nati sunt Die Parasceues, et quotquot nullo fœmineo fœtu intercedente septimi masculi legitimo thoro sunt nati." *Disquisitiones Magicæ, a M. Delrio*, lib. i. cap. 3. Quæstio iv. p. 24. 4to. Venetiis. 1616. So far is plain enough, but Delrio is not always, or often, so intelligible. In imitation of the ancients he tells us that heaven delights in odd numbers, and odd numbers are given to men, who by the same token change every seven years, while women change in six. One might be inclined to find in these more rapid bodily changes an excuse for the proverbial inconstancy of the sex.

‡ For this, and the following popular French superstitions, I am in part indebted to *Pluquet, Contes Populaires, Préjuges, &c.*, 8vo. Rouen. 1834.

usually appear in the form they wore during their life-time. These souls of the dead return to see their friends or relations, and in general demand prayers, or the fulfilment of a promise. Even the sound of their voices is the same as it was when they belonged to the living, and they seldom cease from their visits 'till what they ask has been scrupulously complied with.

Fifollets, i.e. feux-follets. (Will-o-the-Wisp, France). Exhalations from marshes, composed of inflammable gas, which burn with a blueish flame on the surface of stagnant waters, and present a strange and fantastic sight on summer evenings. The country people deem them malicious spirits, that take a delight in leading travellers astray, and afterwards burst out into shouts of villainous laughter. This must not, however, be confounded with the *follets,* which seems to be much the same as the *goubelin,* i.e. household-spirit, the *Kobold* of the Germans.

Letiches. (France).—Animals of a dazzling white, who appear only in the night-time, and disappear as soon as any one attempts to touch them. They do no harm to any one, and according to a beautiful popular belief are the souls of children who have died without baptism. Pluchet in a very prosaic mood suggests that they may be the Ermine of France, a little animal whose natural agility may account for its sudden vanishing.

Lubins. (France).—These are phantoms in the shape of wolves, who prowl about at night, and endeavour to get into churchyards, but for the rest are very timid. The chief of them is all black, and much larger than the others. When any one approaches he stands upon his hind legs, and begins to howl, when the whole troop disappear with cries of "Robert is dead!—Robert is dead!"

Goubelin, or *Gobelin.* (Goblin. France).—A sort of spirit, or familiar demon, who leads horses to drink, gives

them their corn and hay, is a particular friend in some instances, wakes the lazy servants, upsets the furniture, and testifies his satisfaction in such wild pranks by shouts of laughter. He is almost always invisible, though sometimes he shows himself in the shape of a handsome black horse, all ready saddled and bridled. But, woe to the unlucky cavalier who ventures to mount him; he rears, plunges, runs off with his rider, and finally vanishes from under him, leaving him in a quagmire. This trick is familiar to our own Puck, especially amongst the Manx; and the Lutin also, a water-spirit, is fond of assuming the same shape, and drowning those who are simple enough to ride him. Indeed this transformation into a black horse for evil purposes is widely spread amongst the sea-spirits.

Loup-garou, varou, or *warou*. (The Were-wolf. France). —The *loup-garou*, the *wehrwolf* of the Germans is a man metamorphosed by some wizzard into a wolf. The transformation is supposed to run like a lease for a certain odd term of years, three or seven, during which the were-wolf prowls about at night, and is only to be disenchanted by drawing blood from him with a key. The old Norman laws in speaking of certain crimes and their punishment, add, "let the culprit be a wolf,"—wargus esto—that is to say let him be hunted down like a wolf, which is likely enough to have been the origin of the superstition of the were-wolf. This conjecture gains additional force from the term, *wargus*, i. e. *gerulphus*,* *warou*, werewolf, being employed instead of *loup*. As to our own term of were-wolf, *were* is only a very slight corruption of the Latin *vir*, a man, and we

* "Vidimus enim frequenter in Anglia per lunationes homines in lupos mutari, quod hominum genus *gerulphos* Galli nominant." *Gervasius Tilleburiensis* in OTIIS IMPERIAL, part i.

find it used in the same sense in the compound *were-geld*, which literally means *man-money*, that is to say the value of a man, or price at which his murder might be atoned and absolved. I doubt much too whether *warou*, *varou*, gerulphus, and finally *loup* garou, have not all come from the same simple original. However this may be, there is no doubt whatever that the word, *war*, was widely employed amongst the old German dialects in the signification of man, which became *wer* or *were* amongst the Anglo-Saxons, and in time was lost altogether except in a few compounds, themselves almost fallen into disuse.

Rongeur d'Os. (The Bone-Gnawer: France).—This is a phantom in the shape of a large dog, who prowls about the streets of Bayeux in the long winter-nights, gnawing bones, and dragging along a chain. He also is a man, who has been thus transformed by some sorcerer or by the devil. But all these superstitions bear strong marks of a northern origin, and in the oldest sagas in the Edda we find examples of men changed into wolves and dogs by the power of evil genii.

La Bete Saint Loup. (France).—At the beginning of the fifteenth century a furious wolf ravaged the environs of Bayeux and penetrated into the suburbs. Saint Loup, who was then the bishop of that city, took compassion on his diocesans, and went out boldly to meet the brute. At the approach of so godly a personage the animal remained immovable, when the Saint wound his stole about his enemy's neck, and without ceremony drowned him in the river Drôme. At certain periods of the year however, the wolf returns and prowls about the church of Saint Loup. If you have the least doubt of the story, only go to Bayeux, and the good people of the place will show you the very spot where Saint Loup threw the brute into the river, and a bas-relief above the

church-door, as well as a picture within, both confirmative of the fact. We have the greater reason for putting implicit faith in these testimonials, as after all they do not vouch for any very singular miracle. In the following age Saint Vigor did as much, or more; he, who was also a bishop of Bayeux, delivered the country from a serpent whose breath alone poisoned men and animals. Pluquet with his usual proneness to spoiling a good story by explanation wishes to allegorize this into an emblem of the triumph of Christianity over Paganism.

Divination.—"When I was a boy, in North Wilts, (before the Civill Warres) the mayd-servants were wont at night, after supper, to make smoothe the ashes on the hearth, and then to make streakes on it with a stick; such a streak signified particularly to her that made it, such an unmarried man, such a one such a mayd. The like for the men. Then the men and the mayds were to choose by this kind of way their husbands and wifes; or by this divination to know when they should marry. The maydes, I remember, were very fond of this kind of magic, which is clearly a branch of geomantie. Now the rule of geomantie is that you are not to go about your divination but with a great deal of seriousness, and also prayers; and to be performed in a very private place, or on the sea-shore.

"Another remainder of geomancy, to divine whether such a one will return this night or no, is by the sheath of a knife, which one holds at the great end with his two forefingers, and says, 'he comes;' then slips down his upper finger under his lower, and then the lower under that, and says, 'he comes not' and sic deinceps till he is come to the bottome of his sheath, which gives the

answer."* A note in the margin, with the signature of W. K., tells us, "this way of choosing Valentines by making little furrows in the ashes, and imposing such and such names on such line or furrow is practised in Kent and many other parts.—W. K."

Leeks and Ramsons.—In the West of England the following rhymes preserve a popular belief, which, without being actually a superstition, is very much akin to it.

> "Eate leekes in Lide, and ramsins in May,
> And all the yeare after physitians may play."†

Lide is a word used in the West for March; and *ramsins*, or as it is more generally written, ramsons, is a species of wild garlic.

Wind.—"On Malvern Hills, in Worcestershire, and thereabouts, when they fanne their corne and wante wind, they cry 'youle! youle! youle!' to invite it, which word, no doubt, is a corruption of Æolus, the God of the winds."‡

Teeth.—"When children shale (i. e. shed) their teeth, the women use to wrap or put salt about the tooth, and so throw it into a good fire. The above-mentioned Cramer saith that in Germany in his native country, some women will bid their children to take the tooth which is fallen or taken out, and goe into a dark corner of the house or parlour, and cast the same into it, thereby saying these words:

> 'Mouse, here I give thee a tooth of bone,
> But give thou me an iron one.'§

(or iron tooth) believing that another good tooth will grow in its place."

* *Aubrey's Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, MS. folio 111.

† Idem, folio 105.

‡ Idem, folio 110; but I have already shown that *youle* has nothing at all to do with Æolus.

§ Idem, folio 104.

Hares.—"If a hare crosseth the way, or one stumble at the threshold going out, it is still held ominous among the country people."*

Holy Mawle.—If we may trust Aubrey, and I have no where else met with an allusion to this belief, the people at one time used to imagine that a mallet, or wooden hammer, was hung up behind the church door, with which sons might knock their fathers on the head, upon the old gentlemen's attaining the ripe age of seventy. His words are,—"The holy mawle, which they fancy hung behind the church door, which, when the father was seventie, the sonne might fetch to knock his father on the head, as effete and of no more use."†—*Mawle* is the same as *mall,* and signifies a wooden hammer.

Sieve and Shears.—"The magick of the sive and sheeres (I thinke) is in Virgil's Eclogues. The sheeres are stuck in a sieve, and two maydens hold up the sieve with the top of their fingers by the handle of the shiers; then say, 'By St. Peter or St. Paul such a one hath stoln such a thing.' The other saith, 'By St. Peter or St. Paul he hath not stoln it.' After many such adjurations the sieve will turne at the name of the thiefe."‡

Magpie.—"When a magpie chatters on a tree by the house, it declares the coming of a stranger thither that night. So likewise a thiefe in the candle."§

Running Streams.—"Mol Tayler was advised by the wizard of Feversh. to leap three times over a small running streame, to prevent her being taken when she escaped out of prison."‖

Hag-ridden.—"A receipt to cure a horse of being hag-ridden. Take bitter-sweet and holly, and twist them

* *Aubrey's Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, MS. folio 109.
† Id. idem.
‡ Id. idem.
§ Idem, folio 111.
‖ Id. idem.

together, and hang it about the horse's neck like a garland. It will certainly cure him. Probat."* The *probatum* at the end of this recipe is admirable. Aubrey seems resolved that a good story shall not be disbelieved for want of testimony, but, as if not quite satisfied, he gives us a second remedy against the same misfortune in these words—"In the West of England, (and I believe almost every where in this nation) the carters, and groomes, and hostlers, doe hang a flint that has a hole in it over horses that are hagge-ridden, for a preservative against it."

Whinny-Moor.—Grief and joy would seem to have been strangely blended together in the funeral rites of our ancestors, with a plentiful mixture also of superstition. In Yorkshire the vulgar believed, even in Aubrey's time,† that upon the death of any one, his soul went over to Whinny-Moor, a place which had its name from the abundance of *whins*, i. e. *furze*, growing on it, and which was therefore particularly calculated to test the good or evil qualities of the soul in its pilgrimage. At such times, what Aubrey calls a *præfica*,—that is, a woman hired to lament at funerals and sing the funeral song,—would attend and chaunt the following dirge for the benefit of the departed, or, as it may be rather suspected, of the living, for nothing could be better calculated to wake the dormant charity of the superstitious.

"This ean night, this ean night,
every night and awle;
Fire and fleet,‡ and candle light,
and Christ receive thy sawle;

* *Aubrey's Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, MS. folio 113.

† Idem, folio 114.

‡ In a marginal note Aubrey explains *fleet* by *water*, but he gives no authority for his assertion, and I can not help suspecting that he has mistaken the word for *sleet*.

When thou from hence doest pass away,
every night and awle,
To Whinny-Moor thou comest at last,
and Christ receive thy sawle.

If ever thou gave hosen or shun,
every night and awle,
Sitt thee down and putt them on,
and Christ receive thy sawle.
But if hosen nor shoon thou never gave nean,
every night and awle,
The whinnes shall prick thee to the bare beane,
and Christ receive thy sawle.

From Whinny-Moor that thou mayst pass,
every night and awle,
To Brig o'Dread thou comest at last,
and Christ receive thy sawle.
From Brig of Dread, no broader than a thread,*
every night and awle,
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last,
and Christ receive thy sawle.

If ever thou gave either milke or drinke,
every night and awle,
The fire shall never make thee shrink,
and Christ receive thy sawle.
But if milk nor drink thou never gave nean,
every night and awle,
The fire shall burn thee to the bare beane,
every night and awle."

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* Aubrey here favours us with a various reading,
"From Brig of Dread *that thou may'st pass.*"
As these words have been given in the preceding part of the stanza, and do not amend the meaning, I have preferred what the reader now finds in the text. The whole reminds me of some of the monkish Latin hymns, which have a tone of quaint solemnity about them, that charms in spite of their want of classic purity—and I might add of their want of poetry.

New Moon. At one time it was a custom among the women to welcome the new moon with a curtsy, and sometimes with a blessing, the regular formula being, "'tis a fine moon, God bless her," a relick no doubt of Druidism, or of Roman superstition. But the moon appears to have always exerted more influence over the minds of the superstitious than the stars or even the sun itself. Amongst other popular rites, Aubrey records that the women would sit astride across a gate or style on the first evening of the new moon's appearance, and interrogate her as to their future husbands.*

> "All hail to thee, Moon; all hail to thee;
> I prithee, good moon declare to me
> This night who my husband must be."

Invisible Beans. "The Jewes have strange fancies concerning the *invisible beane.* Sc. Take the head of a man that dies of a natural death, and set it in the ground, and in his eie set a beane, cover it with earth, and enclose it about, that nobody may look into it; and without the enclosure set another beane or two. When those without the enclosure are ripe, that within will be ripe also. Then take the bean-stalke within the enclosure, and take a child, which hold fast by the hand, and the child must shell the beanes. There will be but one invisible beane of them all, which when the child have, the other party can not see her." † Aubrey, however, who relates this story refuses to believe it, which considering his usual capacity of belief, seems somewhat capricious. He adds, however, "thus much I am morally certain of, that about 1680 two (or three) Jews merchants did desire of Mr. Wyld Clarke, merchant of London, leave to make this following experiment in his garden at Mile End, which

* See *Aubrey*, ut supra, fol. 116.
† Idem, fol. 167.

he saw them doe, and who told me of it. As I remember, 'twas much after this manner. They took a black catt and cutt off its head, at a certain aspect of the planets, and buried it in his garden by night with some ceremonies, that I have forgot, and put a beane in the braine of the catt; but about a day or two after a cock came and scratch'd it all up. Mr. Clark told me that they did believe it, and yet they were crafty subtle merchants. This brings to my mind a story that was generally believed when I was a schoolboy (before the Civill Warres), that thieves, when they broke open a house, would putt a candle into a dead man's hand, and then the people in the chamber would not awake. There is such a kind of story somewhere among the magical writers."* To be sure there is. It is what the Germans call the *hand of glory*, though with them it is used not for sending people to sleep, but for discovering hidden treasures.

Thunder. "In Herefordshire, and those parts the woemen doe putt iron, e. g.—an iron barr or the like—on the barrell to keep the bêer from sowring."†

Horse-shoes. The belief that nailing a horse-shoe to the threshold is a preservative against witches yet prevails in some parts, and therefore it is highly important to know that the said horse-shoe must be picked up accidentally on the high-way,‡ and there are good and solid reasons for its supposed virtue,—namely that Mars, who is the representative of iron, is an enemy to Saturn the liege-lord of witches.

Invisibility. "Take on Midsummer night at XII, when all the planets are above the earth, a serpent, and kill him and skinne him; and dry it in the shade; and bring it to a powder. Hold it in your hand and it will be invisible.

* *Aubrey*, ut supra, fol. 167.
† Idem, fol. 168. ‡ Id. Idem.

The receipt is in Johannes de Florentiâ, a Rosycrucian in 8vo. in High Dutch. Dr. Ridgley, the physitian hath it, who told me of this."*

Silly-How.—"Great conceits are raised of the involution or membranous covering commonly called the *Silly-How*, that sometimes is found about the heads of children upon their birth, and is therefore preserved with great care, not only as medical in diseases, but effectual in success concerning the infant and others, which is surely no more than a continued superstition. For hereof we read in the life of Antoninus delivered by Spartianus, † that children are born sometimes with this natural cap, which midwives were wont to sell unto lawyers, who had an opinion it advantaged their promotion."‡

Salt—is said by all writers upon magic to be particularly disagreeable to the evil spirits, and it is owing to this noxious substance being dissolved in holy water that it has such power in scaring them away. It seems not improbable that salt acquired this high character and its use in all sacrifices from its powers of resisting corruption.

Unlucky Hours.—Marriage was celebrated in the forenoon, because according to the general belief it was "not so lucky to undertake any serious affaire declinante sole." §

Spell against Hydrophobia.—"Rebus rubus Epilepscum.

* *Aubrey*, ut supra, fol. 131.

† Aubrey, who was a careless, though a tolerably excursive reader has omitted according to his usual custom to give a proper reference to his author. I do not myself remember anything of the kind that he states in Spartianus, who however has written the life of more than one of the Antonines. It is possible too that something of the sort may occur in one of the other five historians whose works are always published in the same volume with Spartianus.

‡ *Aubrey*, ut supra, fol. 174.

§ Id. fol. 177.

Write these words in paper, and give it to the party, or beast, bitten, to eat in bread, or &c. Mr. Dennys of Poole in Dorsetshire sayeth this receipt never fails. Perhaps this spell may be the anagramme of some fence or recipe, as Dr. Bathurst has discovered in Abradacabra."*

* *Aubrey*, ut supra, fol. 179.

THREE PROVERBS.

There were three proverbs, or sayings rather, at one time in use amongst the French, which are curious from their connexion with old customs. They are To Pay his English, To Lose the Hair, and To Lose the Girdle, and to the explanation given of them in *Howell's Familiar Letters* I will add a few remarks from other writers.

To pay his English.—"There is one saying, or proverb, which is observable, whereby France doth confess herself to be still indebted to England, which is when one hath paid all his creditors, he useth to say, *j'ai payè tous mes Anglais,* so that in this and other phrases *Anglais,* is taken for *creancier,* or creditor. And I presume it has its foundation from this, that when the French were bound by treaty in Bretigny to pay England so much for the ransom of King John, then prisoner, the contribution lay so heavy on the people that for many years they could not make up the summe."

To lose the hair.—"There be two other sayings in French, which, though they be obsolete, yet are they worthy the knowledge. The first is, *il a perdu ses cheveux,* he hath lost his hair, meaning his honour; for in the first race of kings there was a law called *la loi de la cheveleure*

whereby it was lawful for the noblesse only to wear long hair; and if any of them had committed some foul and ignoble act, they used to be condemned to have their long hair to be cut off as a mark of ignominie; and it was as much as if he had been *fleurdelized*, viz.: burnt on the back, or hand, or branded on the face." Thus far Howell—but his reading on the subject does not appear to have been very extensive, while he is guilty of the unpardonable fault of giving no authority for the little he does advance. There was no want, however, of information in regard to this matter, for in olden times the hair was held amongst most nations in singular honour, and to be deprived of it in any way was amongst the gravest punishments. Thus Gandinus tells us that a servant who contemned the imperial edicts was to be beaten naked at the stake and to have his head shaved,*—that women, who had committed an offence against others, should also be beaten and shaved by the men of the neighbourhood,†—that a slave should be *polled*, who dared to set fire to a forest ‡—the like should be the punishment of a thief, but on the second offence he was to be *shorn* entirely,§—all these being Lombard customs. Other authors give ample testimony to the same effect. Camerarius in particular is quite eloquent on the subject, devoting to it a whole chapter, wherein he relates a multitude of notable things.‖ The beard and hair, he tells us, in the language of divines

* "Servus, qui literas imperiales despexerit, nudus ad palum vapulet et capilli ejus tondeantur." *Gandin. Tractatus de Maleficiis—De pœnis reorum*, Sect. 55. p. 190, 8vo. Lugduni. 1555.

† "Item verberantur et tonderantur mulieres per viros vicinales, quæ super aliquas aggressionem fecerint." *Id.*

‡ "Item debet tonderi servus qui ignem in sylva mittere ausus fuerit." *Id.*

§ "Decalvatur fur pro secundo furto." *Id.* Sect. 56. *Id.*

‖ *Camerarii Operæ Subcisivæ*, Centuria prima, cap. xxxvi. p. 165, 4to. Francf. 1602-6-9.

were not to be understood as being material, but with reference to the spirit, as appears from the "fragrant beard of Aaron."* In the same way his sons were forbidden by divine law to shave their heads or chins,† and Hesychius Hierosolymitanus maintains that these capillary ornaments were the signs of our wisdom and perfection. From Jean du Tillet, Bishop of Meaux, we learn that it was a custom amongst the ancient Franks during the Merovingian dynasty ‡ that the people should be cropt in sign of subjection; those of the blood royal wore long hair as an emblem of their sovereignty, and from their childhood before they came to the throne allowed it to grow as much as possible, having it bristling up, as it were, behind, while on the two sides in front the said locks were braided, combed, anointed, and perfumed. In this way when the Burgundians had slain Clodomir, the son of Clovis, the first Christian king, they recognized the body by the long locks; and thus too when the son of Chilperic was murdered and flung into the river Marne by order of his mother-in-law, Fredegonde, he was known by the fisherman who had taken the corpse in his nets."§

* Psalm cxxxiii. 2. † Leviticus xxi. 5.

‡ In the notes upon Eginhart *De Vita Caroli Magni* (cap. i. p. 14, 4to. *Traj. ad Rhenum*) we are told that this custom originated with the son of Pharamond.

§ "En la premiere ligneè des Meroviens.... les subjets portoient cheveux roignez, en signe de subjèction; les princes du sang les portoient longs en signe de domination et de leur enfance avant leur advenemens aux couronnes les laissoient croitre tant qu'ils pouvoient, en avoient partie du derriere comme espousees (an old word used by Rabelais and other ancient writers for *herissees*) et par devant des deux costez estoient lesdits cheveux tressez, peignez, oincts, et parfumez. Agathie en sa Histoire Gothique escrit la difference susdite et que les Bourguignons recogneurent aux cheveux longs avoir tuè en la bataille Clodomire fils de Clovis premier Chrestien," &c. *Recueil des Roys de France, &c.*, Par M. J. du Tillet, p. 217. 4to. Paris.

A story singularly illustrative of hair being the ensign of royalty is given by Francis Hotoman, a writer sufficiently distinguished to have been deemed worthy the notice of Bayle. In substance it is as follows. Formerly Queen Chrotildis, the mother of Childebert and Clothaire, was regent, who, being passionately devoted to the children of her deceased son, Chlodomer, used every effort to exclude her surviving sons that she might exalt her grandchildren to the royal dignity. Hence she nourished their locks with the greatest care, of which fact the king-brothers being made aware, they immediately despatched to her a certain Arcadius, who, exhibiting a naked sword and a pair of scissors, gave her the option, which of the two she would have applied to the heads of her grandsons. But she, says Gregory of Tours, moved with excessive rage, particularly when she saw the drawn sword and scissors, replied, in the bitterness of her feelings, "I would rather, if they are not raised to the throne, see them dead than shorn." Thus either grandson was slain before her eyes.*

* "Dominata est quondam Chrotildis Regina, mater Childeberti et Clotharii regum, quæ, cum alterius *filii*, nomine Chlodomeris, demortui filios insano quodam amore prosequeretur, summam contentionem adhibuit ut nepotes, remotis filiis, in regiam dignitatem producerētur. Itaque capillitium eorum summâ cum diligentia nutriebat, cujus rei reges fratres certiores facti, confestim Arcadium quendam ad eam miserunt, qui nudum gladium simulque forcipem ei ostentans, optionem illi faceret utrum illorum nepotum suorum capiti admoveri mallet. At illa, inquit Gregorius Turon, nimium felle commota, præcipuè cum gladium cerneret evaginatum ac forcipem, amaritudine præventa, respondit, 'satius mihi est, si ad regnum non eriguntur, mortuos eos videre quam tonsos.' Ita nepos uterque in ipsius conspectu interfectus. *Franc. Hotomani Francogallia*, cap. xix. p. 13, 12mo. Coloniæ, 1574. It should be observed, however, that in the bishop's narrative the queen is described as not knowing what she said in the excess of her grief—"ignorans in ipso dolore quid diceret"—(*Greg. Tur. Hist. Fran-*

This custom however which limited the privilege to kings and princes fell into desuetude, and hair became the prevailing ornament of all classes, even amongst the Franks as it had ever been amongst most of the German tribes,* for Camerarius tells us that laws were actually made for the punishment of those, who should lay violent hands on the hair or beard of their neighbours. "If any one," says the statute, "plucks out another's hair or beard, let him compound with the injured party for ten libras, and pay a fine to the judge of twenty." † To shave boys or girls against their inclination was also the subject of a heavy mulct.

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cor. lib. iii. cap. 18) which gives a very different colour to the affair. But the most amusing part is the solemn politeness and measured respect of Arcadius—"Voluntatem tuam, o gloriosissima regina, filii tui, domini nostri, expetunt, quid de pueris agendum censeas, utrum incisis crinibus eos vivere jubeas, an utrumque jugulari"—which exquisite address means in English "Most noble queen, our lords, your sons, request to know your pleasure, as to what you choose should be done with the children—whether you command that they should live with shorn locks, or whether you will have both their throats cut."—This is in the highest style of burlesque, and most assuredly never was, and never will be surpassed. But as Tony Lumpkin's friend observes, "the genteel thing is the genteel thing at all times, if so be as how a man is in a concatenation accordingly"—and Arcadius must, it should seem, have been in an admirable "concatenation."

* *Tillet*, up supra, who cites Martial for his authority.

† *Camerarii Operæ Subcesivæ*, Centuria prima. cap. xxxvi., p. 166.—I have not attempted to translate the word, *libra*, from pure ignorance of what its real meaning may be when applied to a fine in the reign of Charlemagne. Du Cange, the usual resource of every one whose knowledge leaves him in the lurch, is learned as usual upon this topic, but the very abundance of his information only adds to the uncertainty. Eckhel, it is true, tells us (*Doctrina Numorum Veterum*, vol. v. p. 4), that *libra* was synonimous with *as*, but this, whether in gold or silver, would make the fine enormous, considering the value of money in the days above alluded to.

In the later times of Greece and throughout the East to deprive a criminal of the hair or beard was considered no slight punishment; in cases of rape it was the usual penalty, as inflicting the highest degree of infamy; and in Tacitus we read that among the Teutones the guilty wife had her hair cut, and was driven forth naked by her husband in presence of all her relations.* So important indeed was the beard that to touch and swear by it was a most solemn form of adjuration, and amongst many nations it was considered to be a substantial pawn or pledge for a creditor,† meaning I presume that in case of failure, the beard, like Shylock's pound of flesh, was to be exacted.

The Lacedemonians ‡ had the same regard for the hair in compliance with the laws of Lycurgus who enjoined the cherishing of it upon the principle that it would make the handsome yet handsomer, while it would at least render the ugly terrible; and Diogenes used to say that he wore a beard in order that he might be known for a man.

On the other hand there were some, who were no less hostile to long hair. Our own Puritans were the staunch advocates for cropt heads, for which indeed they might plead the text of Saint Paul, who says "that if a man have long hair it is a shame unto him," though he admits "if a woman have long hair it is a glory to her.§"

* "Accisis crinibus, nudatam, coram propinquis expellit domo maritus." *Taciti Germania*, cap. xix.

† *Eginhartus De Vita et Gestis Caroli Magni*, cap. i. p. 15, 4to. *Traject. ad Rhenum.*

‡ "Πλουταρχου Αποθεγματα Βασιλεων,"—Opera, vol. i. p. 527. 4to. Oxon. 1795. Edit. D. Wyttenback.

§ 1 Corinthians, xi. 14 and 15.

To lose the girdle.—"The other proverb was, *il a quitte sa ceinture,* he has given up his girdle, which intimated as much as if he had become bankrupt, or had all his estate forfeited, it being the ancient law of France that when any, upon some offence, had that penalty of confiscation inflicted upon him, he used before the tribunal of justice to give up his girdle, implying hereby that the girdle held everything that belonged to man's estate, as his budgett of money and writings, the keys of his house, with his sword, dagger, gloves, &c."

Various sayings, however, and meanings were attached to the girdle. Aubrey,* whom I have so often had occasion to quote, has as usual some pleasant gossip on this subject. He observes, "in Saint John's Gospel† it is sayd, *let your loynes be girt.* It was accounted before the Civill Warrs a very undecent and dissolute thing for a man to goe without his girdle, in so much that 'twas a proverbe,—*ungirt and unblest.* Riolanus in his Anatomie of the Vertebræ quotes the aforesayd text, and saies that that part ungirt makes men to be libidinous." It may be doubted however whether both Aubrey and Riolanus have not mistaken Saint John, who seems to mean nothing more by the phrase than "be ready, keep yourselves prepared."

In another place, entering more at length into the subject, the first-mentioned of these writers says, "many conceive they are unblest until they put on their girdles; wherein there are involved considerations; for by a girdle or cincture are symbolically implied Truth, Resolution, and Readiness for Action, which are parts and virtues required in the service of God. According whereto the Israelites did eat the Paschal Lamb with their loins

* *Aubrey's Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme.* fol. 122, MS. Brit. Mus.

† Chap. v.

girded. And the Almighty bids Job gird up his loyns like a man. So the high priest was girt with a girdle of fine linen. So it is sayd concerning our Saviour, 'righteousness shall be the girdle of his loyns, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins!' Unto this day the Jews doe blessee themselves when they put on their zone or cincture. The heart and parts which God requires are divided from the inferior or concupiscential organs, implying thereby a memento unto purification and cleanness of heart, which is commonly defiled for the concupiscence and affection of those parts. And thus we may make out the doctrine of Pythagoras, to offer sacrifice with our feet naked; that is, that our inferior parts and farthest removed from reason might be free and of no impediment to us."

Amongst the Persians too we find the girdle was an emblem of significance. Upon arriving at years of discretion the Persian youth were invested with the cincture or girdle, when they renewed and ratified their religious obligations. It may be said to have been their sacrament of CONFIRMATION.* In the SAD-DER, the sacred book of Zoroaster, both men and women are enjoined to put on the girdle, called *Camar*, such being the command of God himself, as a token of obedience towards the Creator. This duty is even coupled with the giving of alms, and we are farther told that the girdle expels demons, and confers so much merit on the wearer, that if he have done no other good, this alone will secure him a place in Paradise.† Nor is the superstition by any means confined

* Beausobre, "Hist. de Manichée," vol. i. livre ii. chap. iv. p. 198,

† "Præceptum hoc est in omni suâ vitâ, tam viris tam fœminis, religiosis incumbens alligare cingulum et præstare eleemosynas; nam alligare *custi*, seu cingulum, etiam dictum *Camàr*, est præceptum Dei, cum sit signum obedientiæ ergo Creatorem. Cingulum fuit Gjemshidi institutum quo omnes dæmones fugavit; fuit enim ex ejus cin-

to the Persians. All the Christians of the Levant, whether Syrians, Arabs, or Egyptians, deem it irreligious to go to church without their girdle;* and the monks use a girdle with twelve knots to show that they are followers of the twelve apostles. Hence has come their ceremony of excommunication; when any one is expelled from the communion of the church, the bishop cuts, or tears from him his girdle, as will appear from the following anecdote.

Al-Motavacces, Emperor of the Arabs, had in his service a skilful physician named Honaïn. He was of those Arabs, who professed Christianity, and whom they termed *Al-Ebad*, a word signifying those who served only the Creator, while *Al-Abid* designates those who serve the creatures also. Honaïn seeing at a Christian's, in Bagdad, a picture representing Christ and his disciples, before which they burnt a lamp, said to the master of the house, "why waste your oil so uselessly, for this is neither Christ nor his apostles, but their images?" Another Christian, who was present, and who envied the physician's good fortune, replied, "if this picture be not worthy of adoration, spit upon it." Honaïn did so, and the high-priest being informed of it, excommunicated him and cut his girdle from him.†

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gulo et *chuna*, seu illuminatione, quòd evacuata fuerint opera diabolorum; nam quicunque cingulo ditatus est, ex dimidiâ potestate diaboli evasit, et in dimidiam potestatem Dei positus est. Ipse in avorum religionem credet; et qui cingulo medium cingit, si præterea nullum aliud in mundo bonum opus habet is tamen de omnibus septem terræ climatum meritis (seu bonis operibus) particeps erit in viâ religionis." *Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum.*—Autore T. Hyde, p. 441. 4to. Oxon. 1700.

* "Ex illa Christi Domini sententiâ, *sint lumbi vestri præcincti*, &c. Syri, Arabes, et Egyptii Christiani religioni [contrarium] ducunt ad ecclesiam absque zonâ accedere."—*Bibliotheca Orientalis*, Autore J. S. Assemano, tom. iii. pars i. p. 359. col. 2.

† Beausobre, livre ii. c. iv. p. 199.

ROBERT BURTON.

This name, or that of *Richard* Burton, appears in the title-pages of several curious volumes published about the end of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the eighteenth century by a bookseller of the name of Nathaniel Crouch. In the Bodleian Catalogue they are marked as being written by Burton, alias Crouch, and some have thought they have been written by the bookseller himself. I am not aware of any grounds for the suspicion, though no doubt there must have been some reasons for it, whether true or false. Whoever he was, Aubrey himself was not a more determined collector of gossip whether by hearsay or by reading; nothing seems to have come amiss to him except Popish miracles, and in regard to them he is no less hard of belief than he is credulous on all other occasions. No great use perhaps is to be derived from any of his works, as numerous and as small as the fry of sticklebacks in the New River, but there is some amusement in glancing at these, or at any other old records of credulity, independent of which he has many pieces of pleasant gossip that are no doubt true enough

in the main. In endeavouring to make my readers acquainted with the character of this author, I shall confine myself to his *Admirable Curiosities*, as being the most interesting of his publications.

Wotton's Dream.—"In 1533 Nicholas Wotton, Dean of Canterbury, being then ambassador in France, dreamed that his nephew, Thomas Wotton, was inclined to be a party in such a project, as, if he were not suddenly prevented, would turn to the loss of his life, and ruin of his family. The night following he dreamed the same again; and knowing that it had no influence on his waking thoughts, and much less the desires of his heart, he did the more seriously consider it, and resolved to use so prudent a remedy by way of precaution, as might be no great inconvenience to either party; and thereupon writ a letter to Queen Mary, that she would cause his nephew to be sent for out of Kent, and that the council might interrogate him in such feigned questions as might colour his commitment into a favourable prison, of which he would hereafter give her majesty the true reason. This was done accordingly; and soon after, the queen being married to King Philip, divers persons declared and raised forces against it, among whom Sir Thomas Wyatt of Kent—with whom the family of the Wottons had an entire friendship—was the principal, who, being defeated, suffered death with many others for the same; and of the number Mr. Wotton probably had been; for he afterwards confessed to his uncle that he had some strong intimation of Wyatt's design, and believed he should have engaged in it, if his uncle had not dreamed him into prison."*

The sagacity of the Dean that led him to this fortunate dream, and the prudent use he made of his miraculous

* *Admirable Curiosities*, p. 103. 12mo. London. 1737.

knowledge cannot be too much admired. It would be unjust to demolish a tale so happily imagined, by hinting that he must have had some general notion of the disposition both of his nephew and of his intimate friend, although he was in all likelihood ignorant of their precise designs.

The Mayor and Provost. — "It is memorable what cruel sport Sir William Kingston, the provost marshal, made by virtue of his office on men in misery. One Boyer, mayor of Bodmin in Cornwall, had been amongst the rebels, not willingly but enforced. To him the provost sent word he would come and dine with him, for whom the mayor made great provision. A little before dinner the provost took the mayor aside, and whispered him in the ear that an execution must that day be done in the town, and therefore requested to have a pair of gallows set up against dinner was done. The mayor provided them accordingly. Presently after dinner, the provost, taking the mayor by the hand, entreated him to show him the place where the gallows was, which when he beheld, he asked the mayor if he thought them to be strong enough, 'yes,' said the mayor; 'doubtless they are.'— 'Well then,' said the provost, 'get you up, speedily, for they are provided for you.'—'I hope,' said the mayor, 'you do not mean as you speak.'—'In faith,' says the provost, 'there is no remedy, for you have been a base rebel.'—And so without respite or defence he was hanged to death, a most uncourteous part for a host to offer to his guest."*

The Miller.—"Near the same place dwelled a miller, that had been very active in that rebellion, † who fearing the

* *Admirable Curiosities*, p. 35.

† In the second year of King Edward the Sixth, the king had issued orders that all images should be removed from the churches, that prayers to saints or for the dead should be discontinued, and that the clergy

approach of the marshal, told a sturdy fellow, his servant, that he had occasion to go from home, and if any man should enquire for the miller, he bid him say that he was the miller and had been for three years before. Soon after the provost came, and called for the miller, when out comes the servant, and says he was the man. The provost demanded how long he had kept the mill. Three years, answered the servant. The provost then commanded his men to lay hold of him and hang him on the next tree. At this the fellow cried out, that he was not the miller but the miller's man. 'Nay, sir,' said the provost, 'I will take you at your word; and if thou beest the miller, thou art a busy knave; and if thou beest not, thou art a false-lying knave; and, however, thou canst not do thy master better service than to hang for him.' And so without more ado he was despatched." *

The Suitors.—"At the dissolution of abbeys, King Henry the Eighth gave away large shares to almost every one that asked. Among other instances, take this merry story.

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should dissuade the people from the use of beads, ashes, processions, and masses in a foreign language. To enforce these injunctions commissioners were sent down into Cornwall, but so general was the feeling on the subject, that when one of them attempted to pull down the images in a certain church he was stabbed in the body by a Popish priest, and the whole mass of the people rose in rebellion, demanding to have the Latin mass again and the revival of the six articles of Henry VIII., commonly known as the *Bloody Articles*. The king, or rather those employed by him, condescended to reason with these fanatics, and tried to make them comprehend that the laws in question were cruel and oppressive to the people, reminding them at the same time how often the king had been obliged by those very edicts to be severe upon his subjects. The fanatics however were not to be talked into reason, and the matter coming to the arbitrement of the sword, they were finally put down after a desperate resistance, and punished with the same severity that they were so willing to exercise toward others.

* *Admirable Curiosities*, p. 37.

It happened that two or three gentlemen, the king's servants, waited at the door where the king was to come out, with a design to beg a large parcel of abbey-lands. One Mr. John Champernoun, another of his servants, seeing them, was very inquisitive to know their suit, but they would not impart it to him. In the meantime out comes the king. They kneeled down; so doth Champernoun, being assured by an implicit faith that they would beg nothing hurtful to themselves. They present their petition; the king grants it; they render him humble thanks; so doth Mr. Champernoun. Afterwards he requires his share; they deny it; he appeals to the king, who avows that he meant they should have equal shares, whereupon his companions were forced to allot him the Priory of Saint Germain, in Cornwall, valued at two hundred and forty three pounds a year, so that a dumb beggar met a blind giver, the one as little knowing what he asked as the other what he gave." *

* *Admirable Curiosities*, p. 36.

END OF VOL. I.

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